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THE WORKS

OF THE

LEARNED AND REVEREND

JOHN SCOTT, D. D.

SOMETIME RECTOR OF ST. GILES'S IN THE FIELDS.

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OF

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

PART II.

CHAP. VII. CONTINUED.

SECT. X.

Concerning the ministers of the kingdom of Christ.

HAVING in the foregoing section treated at large concerning the nature and constitution of Christ's kingdom, I shall in the next place shew who the ministers are, by whom he rules and governs it. And these are all included under a fourfold rank and order.

First, The first and supreme minister by which Christ rules his kingdom is the Holy Ghost.

Secondly, The second and next to him are the angels of God.

Thirdly, The third are princes and civil governors.

Fourthly, The last are the bishops and pastors of the church.

I. The supreme minister by which Christ rules his kingdom is the Holy Ghost, or third person in the holy Trinity, of whose person and ministry, under our Saviour in his kingdom, I have treated at large in vol. ii. p. 279—328.

II. Therefore the next order of ministers by which Christ rules his kingdom are the angels of God, that is, the whole world of angels, whether they be

good or bad, angels of light or angels of darkness. In the prosecution of which argument, I shall endeavour first to prove the thing, viz.

That the angels, both good and bad, are the ministers of Christ in the government of his kingdom.

Secondly, To shew wherein their ministry doth consist. First, That the angels, both good and bad, are Christ's ministers in his kingdom: for as for the good angels, they are subjected to Christ by the order and appointment of God himself; who is the *Father of spirits*, and to whom they are inviolably obedient: and for the bad, they are subjected to him by just conquest, contrary to their own wills and inclinations. Of each of which I shall endeavour to give some brief account.

First, The good angels are subjected to Christ by the order and appointment of God, to whom they are always inviolably obedient. It seems at least very probable, that before our Saviour was exalted upon his triumphant ascension into heaven to the universal empire of the world under God the Father, angelical powers were not all of them subjected to his mediatorial royalty, but that some of them had their distinct regencies and presidentships, immediately under God the most high Father, over such and such nations and countries as he in his grace thought meet to allot to them; for so it is evident the Septuagint thought, when in Deut. xxxii. 8. instead of, *He* (i. e. God) *set the bounds of the nations according to the number of the children of Israel*, they render it, *He set the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels of God:* for as the ancient Jews distributed the Gentile world into seventy-two nations, so they also

reckoned seventy-two angels that presided over them; and indeed, considering what follows, ver. 9. *for the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance,* it seems very probable that this translation of the Septuagint was the true sense of the original, viz. That whereas God distributed the Gentile world into so many nations as there were president-angels to be their guardians and governors, he reserved Israel to himself, as his own lot and portion, over which he intended to preside immediately in his own person; and therefore, as a learned writer of our own hath observed, it is not at all improbable, but that instead of בני ישראל, i. e. *the sons of Israel,* as it is now in our Hebrew copies, the ancient reading whence the Septuagint translated might be בני אל, i. e. *the sons of God,* and that *el* might either be mistaken by the transcribers for a final abbreviation of Israel, or changed into *il,* which is the contraction of Israel; and if in the ancient Hebrew it was *the sons of God,* it is no wonder that the Septuagint rendered it *the angels of God;* the *sons of God* being in scripture a very common appellation of angels.

But whether this be so or not, it is evident, that when God threatened to withdraw his personal presence from Israel, upon their worshipping the golden calf, and to put them under the conduct of an angel, Exodus xxxiii. 2, 3. the meaning of it was, that he would no longer preside over them in his own person, but subject them to the government of a president-angel, and therefore, Exod. xxiii. 21. *he bids them beware of this angel, and obey his voice, and not provoke him; for,* saith he, *he will not pardon your iniquities:* which plainly shews, that this angel was to

have had a ruling power over them to pardon or punish them at his own pleasure; so that that which God here threatened was, that he would put them in the same condition with other Gentile nations, who were subjected to the government of particular guardian angels; and so change their theocracy into an angelocracy. And so, as it is evident, Moses understood him; for Exod. xxxiii. 15, 16. he thus prays: *If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are on the face of the earth.* Where it is very plain, that that which distinguished Israel from all other nations was this, that God himself in his own person immediately presided over them; and that if this distinction were taken away by God's withdrawing from them, and subjecting them to the presidence of an angel, they would be left in the same condition with other Gentile nations, who must therefore be supposed to be under the immediate conduct of president angels. And this is most evident of the kingdom of Persia, and the kingdom of Greece in particular, Dan. x. 13. 20. where there is mention made of two angels under the character of *the prince of Persia and the prince of Greece*, and also of a third, viz. Michael, who is styled *one of the chief princes*, and *Michael your prince*, verse 21. and elsewhere *the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people*, Dan. xii. 1. And upon what other account can we suppose them to be styled the princes of those countries, but because they presided over them as their guardians and governors? It is

true, as for the last of them, viz. Michael, he is supposed, by very learned expositors, to be no other than God the Son, who, as I have proved at large, was always the prince and guardian of Israel; but if he were not God the Son, but merely a created angel, it is certain he was not the president or guardian of Israel: since, as was shewn before, they had no other guardian but God himself: but, in all probability, he was the prince of those angels that ministered to God the Son in his guardianship and government of Israel; and consequently that angel of his to whom he intended to subject them, when he threatened to withdraw his personal conduct from them; upon which account he might be called their prince, because under Christ he had a principal share in the protection and government of them. Now these guardian angels seem to have been archangels, or the princes of the distinct orders of angels; for so Michael is not only styled an archangel, Jude 9. but he is also said to have an army of angels under his command and conduct, and with them to have fought *with the dragon*, or Satan, (who was also an archangel,) *and his angels*, Rev. xii. 7. Now though Michael (supposing him to be a created spirit) was not a guardian angel, yet the prophecy of Daniel, by styling him one of the chief princes, plainly assures us that he was an angel of the same rank and degree with the princes or guardian angels of Persia and Greece: from whence it follows, that those guardian angels were archangels, as well as he, and consequently that they also had their angels or appropriate armies of angels, under their conduct and command; in which armies of theirs (whose ministry, without doubt, they always used in the administra-

tion of their respective guardianships) there is no question but there was an exact order and regiment, which cannot well be supposed, without supposing them particular officers subordinated to each other, under their respective princes or archangels; and this seems to be implied in that distinction which the apostle makes between these heavenly spirits, Col. i. 16. *whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers;* where by *thrones* he seems to mean the respective princes or archangels of the several orders; by *dominions*, or lordships, the *reguli*, or chief dignitaries under the archangels; by *principalities*, their governors of such provinces or cities as were within their guardianship; by *powers*, their inferior magistrates or officers.

These archangels therefore, who were the tutelar or guardian angels of countries, together with their respective cohorts or armies of angels, seem not to have been subjected to the mediatorial dominion of our Saviour, till after his ascension into heaven; at which time, it seems, God totally dissolved those angelocracies, or angelical governments of countries and nations, and subjected both them and the archangels (together with their armies of angels) that governed them, to the mediatorial sceptre of our Lord and Saviour; upon which he, who before was King only of the Jews, (vide vol. ii. p. 449.) became universal Lord and Emperor of the world; for so, Heb. ii. 5. we are told, *that to the angels God hath not put in subjection the world to come*, or future age, as it is in the Greek: where by the future age it is evident he means the time of the gospel; for this is the very phrase used by the Septuagint to express the state of Christianity, Isaiah

ix. 6. where Christ is called Πατὴρ μέλλοντος αἰῶνος, *the Father of this future age.* This passage therefore, of God's not subjecting the future age to the angels, plainly implies that he had subjected the past age to them, by constituting them the guardians of nations; but that now in this age of the gospel he hath wholly dissolved that economy, by subjecting both the guardians and the nations they guarded to the dominion of our Lord and Saviour: so that now the whole world of angels is in the same subjection to Jesus Christ, as it seems Michael and his angels were before Christ's exaltation; that is, they are now no longer subject as deputy governors of provinces and nations, who as such were empowered to do good or hurt to those who were under their government, according to their own discretion; but as the immediate attendants of his person, to whom nothing is left arbitrary, but all they do is determined by the sovereign will of him who employs them; for thus the scripture declares, that upon his ascension into heaven he was vested with new dominion over the angelical world; so we are told, 1 Pet. iii. 22. that it was upon his *going into heaven, and sitting down at the right hand of God, that angels, and authorities, and powers were made subject unto him;* and in Eph. i. 21. that God *raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion,* i. e. above all angels, of what rank and quality soever, *and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come;* and accordingly, Col. ii. 10. he is said to be *head of all principality and power,* i. e. of all the heavenly hierarchy, as well as earthly do-

minions: thus also the apostle tells us, that upon his ascension into heaven *God hath given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow*, i. e. that every being should acknowledge subjection, *either of things in heaven, or of things on earth, or things under the earth;* i. e. whether of angels, or men, or devils. And as all these angelical powers are now subjected to Christ, so do they all of them minister under him in his kingdom; for so Heb. i. 14. they are said to be all of them *ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation;* and in so doing they must necessarily minister under him who is *the Captain of our salvation;* and accordingly, in Rev. v. 6. those seven angels which in Zech. iv. 10. are said to be *the seven eyes of the Lord which run to and fro the whole earth,* and therefore styled *the watchers*, Dan. iv. 13. as being the chief instruments of the divine Providence, are called *the seven eyes of the Lamb*, by whose ministry and agency he inspects and governs his kingdom, which plainly implies, that they now minister to the exalted Mediator, in the same capacity that they heretofore ministered to God Almighty himself.

2. And then, secondly, as the good angels are subject to Christ by the ordination and appointment of God, so the bad are subjected to him by just and lawful conquest; for so the scripture assures us, that our blessed Saviour subdued them to his mediatorial empire, by pure dint of just force and violence: for so we find in his lifetime he frequently contested with these evil spirits, and, in despite of all their power and malice, continually vanquished

and repelled them. Thus in his temptation in the wilderness, with only that powerful command, *Get thee hence, Satan*, he put the Devil to flight, Matth. iv. 10, 11. So also upon his approach towards the two possessed Gergesenes, the devils that possessed them made a hideous outcry, *What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?* and were forced to depart immediately upon his command, Matth. viii. 29. Nor did he only vanquish them himself in all the personal conflicts he had with them, but he also gave his disciples *authority over all devils*, Luke ix. 1. insomuch that, Luke x. 17. his disciples acquaint him, *Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.* But these were only so many successful skirmishes with those powers of darkness, in which they fought against him, sometimes in single combat, and sometimes in smaller parties: but the main battle, in which they engaged him with all their power and might, and by winning of which he completed his conquest, and finally subdued them to his empire, seems to have been that which he fought in his last agony; wherein, after they had reduced him to the utmost distress, he struck them with the spiritual thunderbolts of inward horror and confusion, and in a panic dread forced them to turn their backs and flee from him. For first, it is evident that before he entered the garden, where his agony seized him, he expected some terrible assault from these infernal powers: so he tells his disciples, just before he went thither, *Hereafter I will not talk much with you; for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me:* i. e. Give me leave now to discourse freely with you, be-

cause within a very little while I shall be so engaged, that I shall not be at leisure to discharge my mind to you; for the prince of devils is just now mustering up all his legions against me, and is coming to make his last effort upon me: but this is my comfort, he will find nothing in me, no sinful inclination to take part with him, no guilty reflection to expose me to his tyranny, John xiv. 30. And accordingly, Luke xxii. 53. when the Jews had apprehended him, he expostulates the case with them, why they did not lay hands on him before, when he *was daily with them in the temple;* and then answers himself, *But now is your hour, and the power of darkness.* As much as if he should have said, I need not wonder you did not seize me sooner; for this, alas! is the appointed time wherein my Father had decreed to let loose the devils and you upon me. Which plainly shews that in that dismal hour he was assaulted by the devils as well as by the Jews; for in all probability those crafty and sagacious spirits had smelt out the merciful design of his approaching death, viz. that it was to be a ransom for the sins of the world: and therefore, though they were desirous enough of his death, as is apparent by their animating Judas and the Jews against him, yet, dreading the end and intention of it, they resolve to employ all their art and power to tempt and deter him from undergoing it, and either to prevail with him to avoid it by a shameful recantation, or at least not to consent to it; that so being forced and involuntary it might be void and ineffectual. In which black design of theirs God himself thought meet so far to favour them, as to give them his free permission to try him to the utmost; that so having experienced in him-

self the utmost force of temptation that human nature is liable to, he might thereby be touched with a more tender sympathy with it, or, as the author to the Hebrews expressed it, that *having suffered himself being tempted, he might be able to succour them that are tempted,* chap. ii. 17, 18. But then, secondly, if we consider the woful circumstances of his agony, it is evident that it was the effect of some far more powerful cause than merely a natural fear of his ensuing death and bodily torment; for no sooner was he entered on that tragic stage, but *he began to be sorrowful,* said St. Matthew, chap. xxvi. 37. or *to be sore amazed,* as St. Mark, chap. xiv. 33. or *to be very heavy,* as both; which words, according to their native signification, declare him to have been all on a sudden oppressed with some mighty damp, which, arising from some fearful spectacle or imagination, overwhelmed his soul with an unknown and inexpressible anguish, an anguish that sunk and depressed him into as deep a dejection as it was possible for an innocent mind to endure; causing him to groan out that said complaint, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death,* Περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχή μου, i. e. My soul is encompassed with grief, and, like a desolate island, surrounded on every side with an ocean of sorrows, and that even unto death: as if it had been struggling under some mortal pang, and the pains of hell had got hold upon it. And so intolerable was his passion, that though he liberally vented it both at his eyes and lips, in tears, and sighs, and sorrowful complaints; yet that was not a sufficient discharge for it, but through all the innumerable pores of his body it poured out itself *as it were in great drops of blood,*

Luke xxii. 44. All which considered, I can by no means think that that which occasioned this bitter agony was merely the prospect of what he was going to suffer from the hands of men, since not only some martyrs, but some malefactors have suffered much more with less dejection; and if you consult the history, you will find that he bore his death far better than his agony: from whence we have just reason to believe that the latter was more grievous to him than the former, and that the crucifixion of his body on the cross was nothing near so painful to him as the crucifixion of his mind in the garden; and since his sufferings in his agony are described with more tragical circumstances than his sufferings on the cross, we have just reason to conclude they were inflicted on him by more spiteful and powerful executioners, and consequently that he endured the tortures of men only on the cross, but of devils in the garden; where being left all alone, naked, and abandoned of the ordinary supports of his godhead, and having only an angel to stand by and comfort him, (i. e. to represent such considerations to him of the benefits and advantages of his death, as were most proper to fortify him against the temptations which the devils were then urging, to deter him from it,) he was in all probability surrounded with a mighty host of devils, who exercised all their power and malice to persecute his innocent soul, to distract and fright it with horrid phantasms, to afflict it with dismal suggestions, and vex and cruciate it with dire imaginations and dreadful spectacles. Thirdly, If we consider that strange unaccountable drowsiness which seized his disciples, whilst he was in his agony, it seems to have been the effect of a

diabolical power; for before he entered into the garden, he had expressly told them that the hour was come, wherein he was to be taken from them by an untimely death: so that one would have thought the dear love which they bore him, together with the infinite concern they had in him, might have been sufficient to have kept them awake for a few hours; yet, notwithstanding he desired them to watch with him, (being loath, it seems, to be left alone, in the dark night, among a company of horrid and frightful spectres,) upon his return to them he found them fast asleep, and though he gently upbraided them with their unkindness, *What, could ye not watch with me one hour?* yet he no sooner left them, but they fell asleep again; *for*, as the text tells us, *their eyes were heavy;* heavy indeed, that could not hold up for a few hours upon such an awakening occasion. It is true, indeed, St. Luke attributes this prodigious drowsiness of theirs to their sorrow, and so it is usual in scripture to put the apparent cause for the real, when the real cause is secret and invisible. But how can we imagine that mere sorrow should necessitate three men to fall asleep together under the most awakening circumstances, all things considered, that ever happened to mortals? Why did it not as well force them to fall asleep again afterwards, when their Lord was apprehended, condemned, and crucified? at all which times they were doubtless rather more sorrowful than they were in the garden. And therefore it seems very probable, that there was a much more powerful cause than sorrow in the case, viz. a preternatural stupefaction of their senses, by some of

those malignant spirits that were then conflicting with our Saviour; who, perhaps, to deprive him of the solace of his disciples' company, did, by their diabolical art, produce that extraordinary stupor that oppressed them; that so having him all alone, they might have the greater advantage to tempt and terrify him. Fourthly and lastly, if we consider the warning our Saviour gave his disciples, when they entered the garden with him, of the extraordinary danger they were in of falling into temptation, it seems very probable that he expected and found there an extraordinary concourse of tempters, or evil spirits: for as soon as they were entered with him into the garden, St. Luke tells us that he bade them, *Pray that ye enter not into temptation*, Luke xxii. 40. and when, notwithstanding this admonition, they fell asleep the first time, he bids them, *Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation*, Matth. xxvi. 41. which words plainly imply our Saviour's apprehension of some extraordinary danger they were in of being tempted in the very time and places of his agony. And what more probable account can be given of this apprehension of his than this, that he found vast numbers of evil spirits there, by whom he himself at that very time was furiously tempted and assaulted, and that therefore, having experienced their power and malice in himself, he thought meet to admonish his disciples (who were much less able to resist them than he) to stand upon their guard, lest they should tempt them, as they had tempted him.

For these reasons it seems highly probable that this last agony of our Saviour was nothing else but

a mighty struggle and conflict with the powers of darkness; who having, by God's permission, mustered up all their strength against him, intending once more to try their fortune against him, and if possible to tempt or deter him from prosecuting his design of redeeming the world, were in the end gloriously repulsed by his persevering resistance, and forced to flee before him: and of this his glorious victory over them he made an open show upon the cross, where, in despite of all those terrors and temptations they had exercised him with, if possible to divert him from laying down his life for the world, he freely and voluntarily poured out his blood as a sacrifice for the sins of mankind. And hence the apostle tells us, Col. ii. 15. that on his cross *he spoiled principalities and powers*, viz. in that victorious act of laying down his life to ransom us from their power, in despite of their most exquisite temptations to the contrary, *and made an open show of them, triumphing over them.* And by this glorious victory he finished his conquest of those infernal powers, so that from thenceforth they never durst assault him more; but like vanquished slaves, were forced to yield their unwilling necks to the yoke of his empire, and (though with infinite reluctance) to obey his will, and execute his orders: and hence we are told, that *by his death our Saviour has destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil,* Heb. ii. 14. so that now at his powerful name *every knee must bow*, or every being yield obeisance, not only *of things in heaven, and of things on earth*, i. e. of angels and men, *but of things under the earth too*, i. e. of devils, who, notwithstanding they are incensed with an implacable animosity against

him, and would gladly pull him down from his throne, if they had but power answerable to their malice; yet having long since experienced the might of his victorious arms, even then when they had him at the greatest advantage, and being thereby driven into everlasting despair of prevailing against him, they have from thenceforth been forced, by the mere dread and terror of his power, to submit themselves to him, and to become his servants and ministers in his heavenly kingdom: so that now whatsoever they do, it is by his permission or order, who holds their mischievous power in chains, and lets it loose, or restrains it, as he pleases.

And thus having proved at large that both the good and bad angels are Christ's subjects and ministers; I proceed, in the second place, to shew wherein their ministry to Christ in his kingdom consists.

And, in the first place, I shall shew wherein the ministry of good angels consists.

And, secondly, wherein consists the ministry of bad angels. And because the philosophy of the nature and operations of angels is far above the ken of our shortsighted understanding, I shall not presume to inquire any farther into the ministry of either good or bad angels than the scripture gives me light; in which we find these seven following instances of the ministry of good angels under Christ.

First, They declare, upon occasion, his mind and will to his church.

Secondly, They guard and defend his subjects against outward dangers.

Thirdly, They support and comfort them upon great undertakings, and under pressing calamities.

Fourthly, They protect them against the rage and fury of evil spirits.

Fifthly, They further and assist them in all their religious offices.

Sixthly, They conduct their separated spirits into the mansions of glory.

Seventhly, They are to attend and assist Christ in the great solemnity of the day of judgment.

I. One instance of the ministry of angels in the kingdom of Christ, is their declaring upon occasion his mind and will to his church and people: for thus most of those prophetic messages, which God from time to time sent to the world, were conveyed to the prophets by the ministry of angels: so Daniel, for instance, had all his visions from an angel of God, vide Dan. viii. 19. and chap. ix. 22, 23. as also chap. x. 11. so also the prophet Zechariah, vide chap. i. 9,14,19. and chap. ii. 3, 4. and sundry other instances there are of it in the New Testament, vide Matt. i. 20,21. as also chap. ii. 13, 20, 22. and Luke i. 13, 30, 31. and many other places: and it was an ancient and catholic doctrine among the Jews, that all prophecy was communicated by the mediation of angels; whence the pharisees, describing St. Paul as a prophet, thus pronounce concerning him: *We find no evil in this man; but if a spirit or angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God,* Acts xxiii. 9. And accordingly we find our Saviour sending forth his holy angels on prophetic messages to his church: for so St. John received his revelations from Christ by the hand of an angel, Rev. i. 1. and xxii. 16. And an angel is sent from Christ to Philip, to bid him go to the Ethiopian eunuch to expound to him the prophecy of Isaiah, Acts viii. 26. And

Cornelius received a message from Christ by an angel, requiring him to send to Joppa for St. Peter to instruct him in the Christian religion, in Acts x. 3, 4, 5. But since that Christ hath revealed his whole will to his church, and transmitted it down by a standing scripture, this ministration of the holy angels is in a great measure ceased, and to this written word of his we are entirely referred, as to the perpetual rule of our faith and manners; insomuch, that if thenceforth even *an angel from heaven should preach any other gospel to us* than what we have there received, he is pronounced *accursed*, Gal. i. 8. Not but that sometimes, and upon great emergencies, they may be still sent from heaven with new messages to us, to discover some useful secret, or to inspire our minds with the notice of some future contingencies, that are of great moment to us; though this very rarely, it being no part of their ordinary ministry. But since the revelation of the gospel was completed, to be sure they never reveal any new doctrine to us; they may be assisting geniuses to our understandings, to excite in them a true apprehension of what is already revealed, by impressing our imaginations with clear and distinct ideas and representations of things that are revealed more obscurely; but to suppose that they still reveal new doctrinal truths to us, is not only to deny the perfection of written revelation, but to open a wide door to all manner of enthusiasm.

II. Another instance of the ministry of angels in the kingdom of Christ is their guarding and defending his subjects against outward dangers: for thus the angels are said *to encamp round about those that fear God, to deliver them*, Psalm xxxiv. 7.

And though I see not sufficient reason to be fully persuaded that every faithful subject of the kingdom of Christ has an appropriate guardian angel appointed to him, yet, from that caution of our Saviour, Matth. xviii. 10. it is evident, that he employs his angels to attend as an invisible lifeguard upon the persons of all good Christians; for, saith he, *Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven;* i.e. Those blessed spirits, which are appointed by God to be their guardians upon earth, have yet their continual returns and recourse to God's glorious presence in heaven; and, having always access to him, to offer up requests or complaints in their behalf, it must needs be a very dangerous thing for any to presume to despise or offend them, lest he thereby provoke those mighty spirits to sue out and execute some commission of vengeance upon him. From whence it is evident, that the blessed angels are greatly concerned in the vindication and protection of the faithful, and that that promise, Psalm xci. 10, 11, 12. is still in force, viz. *There shall no evil befall thee—for he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.* And this they do sometimes by removing such evil accidents from us, as in the course of necessary causes must have befallen us: for there is no doubt but these powerful spirits have a mighty influence upon necessary causes, (at least upon a great many of them,) and can retard, or precipitate, or vary, or divert their motions, as they see occasion, and thereby prevent a great many accidents which

must otherwise have befallen, had they permitted them to proceed in their natural courses. Other times again they divert the mischievous intentions of our enemies, by injecting sudden fears into them, and brandishing horrid phantasms before their imaginations, (as the angel did the flaming sword before Balaam,) when they are just upon executing their malice. Sometimes again they warn us of dangers approaching, either by some external sign or unaccountable impression on our fancies, by which we are vehemently solicited, without any visible cause or reason, either to proceed very cautiously in the ways where our danger lies, or to stop and forbear a while, or steer some other course. Of all which there are innumerable instances to be found in history.

III. Another instance of the ministry of angels in the kingdom of Christ is their supporting and comforting his faithful subjects upon difficult undertakings, and under great and pressing calamities: for thus not only our Saviour himself was comforted in his last agony by an angel from heaven, Luke xxii. 43. but St. Paul also tells us, that being in imminent danger of being shipwrecked in a storm in his voyage to Rome, *there stood by him in the night an angel of God, whose he was, and whom he served, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee,* Acts xxvii. 23, 24. So also when the apostles by an order from the high priest were cast into the common prison, the text tells us, that *an angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life,*

Acts v. 19, 20. So also, in the ancient martyrologies of the church, we meet with sundry relations of the appearance of angels to the suffering martyrs, and of the wonderful comforts they administered to them to support their faith and patience under their agonies and torments. And although since the cessation of miracles they do not ordinarily perform this ministry to us in visible appearances, yet there is no doubt, but as they are spirits, they have spiritual and invisible ways of conversing with our spirits, and of administering comforts to us in our needs and extremities; for though they can have no immediate access to our mind, which is a dark, mysterious chamber, into which no other eye can penetrate but his who is *the Searcher of all hearts*, yet that they can vehemently impress our fancies with joyous representations, and thereby exhilarate our drooping spirits to that degree, as to transport us into raptures of bodily passion, is not to be doubted, there being so many sensible experiments of it in the ancient prophets, whose imaginations were sometimes so vehemently impressed with frightful ideas by the angels which conversed with them, as that they immediately fell into an agony, and were seized with unaccountable horrors and tremblings; and not only the prophets themselves, that saw the angel, were thus affected, but sometimes their companions too that saw him not, of which you have an instance in Dan. x. 7. where Daniel tells us, that *he alone saw the vision* of the angels, and that *the men that were with him saw not the vision, but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves:* which is a plain evidence of the great power which the angels have over our bodily passions, even when

they are invisible to us; so as to strike what note soever they please upon them, whether it be fear, or sorrow, or joy; and it being in their power to excite our passions to what degree they please, there is no doubt but that, being ministering spirits, they can and do minister joy and comfort to us, whenever our case and circumstances require it.

IV. Another instance of the ministry of angels in the kingdom of Christ, is their protecting his subjects against the rage and fury of evil spirits: for considering with what a fierce and indefatigable malice those malignant spirits, which in vast numbers rove about in the air, are animated against mankind, and especially against the subjects of Christ, their most dreaded and implacable enemy; and considering also the mighty power they have, as they are angels, to do mischief, it is not to be imagined but that, were they not opposed and restrained by a mightier power than their own, they would never be able to forbear exercising their direful rage and cruelty upon us, till they had converted this earth into hell, and made this school of our probation the place of our torments: and as for the kingdom of Christ, whose subjects have so solemnly renounced their yoke and dominion, to be sure they would never cease infesting it with the fiery darts of their malice, till they had utterly ruined and destroyed them; and therefore, to prevent their mischievous attempts, God in mercy hath thought meet to commit us to the guardianship of his holy angels, and to send them forth under the conduct of Jesus our Mediator, to fight against these hellish powers in the defence of his church and people: for so God promised Jerusalem, Zech. ii. 5. that *he would be as a*

wall of fire round about her, i. e. as the most learned expositors suppose, by surrounding her with a guard of angels, whom, in the defence of his people against evil angels, he *maketh flaming fire*, as the Psalmist expresses it, Psalm civ. 4. and in Rev. xii. 7. we read of a *war in heaven*, (or the airy region, of which the Devil is called the prince,) *Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels:* which war Michael undertook, as the foregoing verses tell us, in the defence of the *woman that was clothed with the sun;* which all agree was the Christian church: so also, in ver. 9. of St. Jude's Epistle, we read that *Michael the archangel contended and disputed with the Devil about the body of Moses*, or Jewish church, so called for the same reason that the Christian church is called *the body of Christ.* And it is very probably supposed that that *hedge*, which the Devil complained God had set about Job, and about his house, by which he was hindered from breaking in upon him, was no other than a guard of angels, by which he was *driven back*, as oft as he attempted to execute his rage and malice upon him, chap. i. 10. Now by what means or instruments the good angels war against and repel the evil ones is, I conceive, an inquiry beyond our cognizance, revelation (from whence we receive all our notions of the state and economy of the invisible world) being wholly silent in the case; only thus much we may say, without any way presuming beyond our capacity, that spiritual agents can as easily strike upon spirits, as bodily agents do upon bodies; and though we, who are spectators only of corporal motion, can give no account of the manner how one spirit acts upon an-

other, yet there is no reason at all to doubt, but that they have some way of impressing one another, and communicating to each other a mutual sense and feeling of each others' pleasures and displeasures: and if so, then it is easy to suppose, that the more powerful any spirit is, the stronger and more exquisite impressions of its displeasure it can make upon other spirits, and consequently that the good angels, who by preserving their innocence, and improving their perfections, have augmented and redoubled their natural strength and vigour, are much more powerful than the bad ones, (who have rather impaired it,) and so are much more able to withstand and repel the violent impressions of the bad angels, than the bad angels can theirs: so that though the bad angels may, and oftentimes do, resist and oppose the good, yet they can never conquer them; but in the conclusion are still forced to flee before them, as being unable to withstand their more powerful impressions. Since therefore *we wrestle not with flesh and blood*, i. e. not only with flesh and blood, *but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickednesses in high places*, i. e. against the several ranks of devils that are in the air, under the command and conduct of Beelzebub their prince, Eph. vi. 12. and since these apostate spirits are by much too strong and powerful for us, so that, were we left to grapple with them alone, by our own single strength, they would infallibly vanquish and lead us captive to eternal ruin; God hath thought meet to subject his holy angels to the command of our compassionate Mediator, that so, whenever we are too hardly beset by these evil spirits, he might send

them forth to guard and protect us against them, and either to assist us in our conflicts with them, or to chase them away from us, when we are no longer able to withstand them; and accordingly we have a sure word of promise, that if we *resist the Devil, he shall flee away from us*, James iv. 7. not that our weak resistance is in itself sufficient to put those daring and mighty spirits to flight; but the meaning without doubt is, that if, when they assault us with any temptation to sin, we do but oppose them with a sincere resolution, God will not permit us to be vanquished by them; but, whenever they press too hard upon us, will be sure to send down some good angel to us, to repel and drive them away from us; for so he hath promised that *he will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it*, 1 Cor. x. 13. which plainly implies, that, should God suffer him, the Devil can tempt us *above what we are able;* and this, without doubt, he is ordinarily hindered from by the timely interpositions of the holy angels, who, when our strength begins to fail, are always ready to second us, and with their victorious arms to encounter and put to flight those evil spirits that do so importunately tempt us.

V. Another instance of the ministry of angels in the kingdom of Christ, is their furthering and assisting his subjects in the works and offices of religion; for since they are said to *minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation*, there is no doubt but that they minister to them in the discharge of their religious obligations, upon which their salvation depends; and since, as our Saviour assures us, *there is joy in the*

presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repents, Luke xv. 10. we cannot but suppose, that, so far as their own ability and the laws of the invisible world will permit them, they do promote and further our repentance; since in so doing they contribute to their own joy; and, in a word, since the scripture assures us, that the angels are present in our holy assemblies, (which that passage of St. Paul seems necessarily to imply, 1 Cor. xi. 10. *For this cause ought the woman to have power over her head*, i. e. to be veiled in the sacred assemblies, *because of the angels*, or out of a decent respect and reverence to those blessed spirits who are supposed to be present there;) since, I say, they are present in our religious assemblies, we cannot reasonably suppose them to be present merely as idle auditors and spectators, who have nothing else to do but only to observe and gaze upon our holy solemnities; and therefore must conclude that their great business there is to assist us in the performance of them, to remove our indispositions, and recollect our wanderings; to fix our attention, excite our affections, and inflame our devotions: for besides, as they are the ministers of the divine Providence, they have many opportunities of presenting good objects to us, and removing temptations from us, of disciplining our natures with prosperities and afflictions, and of so ordering and varying our outward circumstances, as to render our duty more facile and easy to us: besides which, I say, as they are spirits, they have a very near and familiar access to our souls; not that they can make any immediate impressions on our understanding or will, which are a sphere of light to which no created spirit can approach, it being under

the immediate economy of the Father of spirits; but yet, being spirits, there is no doubt but they may, and oftentimes do, insinuate themselves into our fancies, and mingle with the spirits and humours of our bodies, and by that means never want opportunity both to suggest good thoughts to us, and raise holy affections in us. For that they can work upon our fancies is apparent, else there could be neither angelical nor diabolical dreams; and if they can so act upon our fancies, as to excite new images and representations in them, they may by this means communicate new thoughts to our understanding, which naturally prints off from the fancy those ideas and images which it there finds set and composed. And as they can work upon our fancies, so there is no doubt but they can influence our spirits and humours; else they have not the power so much as to cure or inflict a disease; and by thus working upon our spirits they can moderate as they please the violence of our passions, which are nothing but the flowings and reflowings of our spirits to and fro from our hearts; and by influencing our humours they can compose us, when they please, into such a sedate and serious temper, as is most apt to receive religious impressions, and to be influenced by the heavenly motions of the Holy Ghost. These things, I doubt not, the blessed angels can and frequently do, though we perceive it not, and though, by the laws of the world of spirits, they may probably be restrained from doing their utmost for us, that so we may still act with an uncontrolled freedom, and be left under a necessity of a constant and diligent endeavour; yet this we may be sure of, that as the evil angels are always busy to pervert and seduce us from our duty,

so the good are no less active to reduce us to, and assist us in it.

VI. Another instance of the ministry of angels in the kingdom of Christ, is their conducting the separated spirits of his faithful subjects to the mansions of glory. It was an ancient tradition among the Jews, that the souls of the faithful were conducted by angels into paradise, of which the Chaldee Paraphrase makes mention on Cant. ii. 12. and this tradition of theirs is confirmed by our Saviour, Luke xvi. 22. where he tells us, that when Lazarus died, *he was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom*, i. e. into that place of refreshment where the soul of Abraham, who was the father of the faithful, dwells; and in all probability that fiery chariot and horses, wherein Elias was mounted up to heaven, 2 Kings ii. 11. was nothing but a convoy of angels; and accordingly Tertullian, *de Anima*, c. 52. styles the angels *evocatores animarum*, i. e. the messengers of God, that call forth the lingering souls out of their bodies, and shew them the *paraturam diversorii*, the preparation of those blessed mansions where they are to abide till the resurrection. And this office the good angels do perform to the souls of the faithful, not merely to congratulate their safe arrival into the world of blessedness, though there is no doubt but that they, who do so heartily rejoice in the conversion of sinners, are ready enough to congratulate their glorification; but that which seems to be the great reason of this ministration of theirs, is to guard holy souls, when they leave their bodies, through those lower regions of the air, which are the seat and principality of the apostate angels, who may therefore be very reasonably supposed to be conti-

nually lying in wait there, like birds of prey, to seize upon the souls of men, as soon as they are escaped out of the cage of their bodies into the open air, and either to scare and terrify them in their passage to heaven, or to lead them away captive into their dark prisons of endless horror and despair; and therefore, to prevent their affrighting good souls (which is all the hurt they can do them) as they pass along through their territories, they are no sooner parted from their bodies, but they are taken into the custody of some good angel or angels, who guard them safe through the enemies' quarters, and beat off those evil spirits from them that would fain be infesting and assaulting them: and it is not at all improbable, but that by this very thing those evil spirits do distinguish what souls do belong to them from what do not, viz. their being destitute of or attended with this holy guard of angels. When they behold a separated spirit under this heavenly convoy, they fly away from it with infinite rage and envy to see it irrecoverably rescued out of their power to make it miserable; but when they perceive one destitute and abandoned of this angelic guard, they immediately seize it as their own, and so commit it to their chains of darkness. And as the good angels do guard good souls, as they pass through the air, against the power and malice of the *prince of the power of the air*, so they also conduct and guide them to their mansions of blessedness. For when the departed soul is wafted through the air into those immense tracts of ether, wherein the sun and all the heavenly bodies swim, how would it be possible for it, in such a vast and unknown continent, ever to find its way to the seat of the blessed, without the conduct of

some experienced guide? And who can be better experienced in that celestial road, than those winged messengers of the Almighty King, who in the execution of his high behests are always travelling to and fro between heaven and earth? And therefore our Saviour hath committed the separated spirits of his faithful subjects to these most skilful and faithful guides, who, in pursuance of his commission, are some or other of them still attending upon every good man's decease, to receive his soul into their custody, as soon as ever it is expired, and to guard it against evil spirits, as it passes through the air, and thence to conduct it through all those spacious fields of ether, which extend themselves far and wide beyond all the visible lights of heaven, to those happy abodes which the divine goodness hath prepared for glorified spirits.

VII. And lastly, another instance of the ministry of angels to our Saviour in his kingdom, is their attending and assisting him in the great solemnity of the day of judgment: for thus in all his most solemn and conspicuous works of providence our Saviour hath still been pleased to make use of the ministry of his holy angels: so when he came to ratify his covenant with Jacob, the mysterious preface of that great solemnity was a ladder reaching from heaven to earth, and the angels ascending and descending upon it; which was doubtless intended for an emblem of that everlasting covenant by which man was to ascend to God, and God to descend to man: so also when the law was delivered by him upon the mount, the angels descended with him, and pitched their tents about it in circles of flaming fire, to signify to the people those flames of venge-

ance that would certainly pursue and seize them, if they were not obedient to those words that were thence delivered to them: so also when he was born into the world, the holy angels came down to sing his Christmas carol, and at once to proclaim and celebrate his nativity; and it is the opinion of some learned men, that that multitude of the heavenly host, which St. Luke speaks of, and who sang that anthem of *Glory be to God on high* at our Saviour's nativity, Luke ii. 13. contained the whole nation of angels, because in Heb. i. 6. it is said, that *when God brought in the first begotten into the world, he said, Let all the angels worship him;* that is, as they understand it, when our Saviour was born, God gave order to all the angels of heaven to come down and do homage to him, who was ere long to be their sovereign Lord under the most high Father. Thus also a little before Jerusalem was destroyed, Josephus tells us, that the heavens were spread with troops of armed men, who without doubt were the blessed angels, that by their fantastic combats in the air did presignify the ensuing tragedy of that bloody city. It is no wonder then, if the great solemnity of doomsday, of which Jerusalem's desolation was only a mournful type, shall also be adorned and illustrated with the presence and attendance of the holy angels: for this great transaction is to be the winding up of the vast bottom of divine Providence over the whole race of fallen and degenerate mankind, and the close and conclusion of the mediatorial kingdom of our Lord and Saviour; and therefore will without doubt be performed with the greatest grandeur and magnificence. This is to be the great day of our Saviour's triumph, wherein his friends shall be crowned, and

his enemies made his footstool: and such a solemnity may well deserve the attendance and ministry of all the heavenly angels, who accordingly shall then descend with our Saviour from the highest heavens in bright ethereal bodies, such as shall render them gloriously conspicuous to all the lower world, and so fit to adorn the triumphs of that glorious day: for so the scripture assures us, not only that *he shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God,* 1 Thess. iv. 16. but also that *he shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him,* Matth. xxv. 31. and that *he shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,* and that *he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of his holy angels,* Luke ix. 26. and in a word, that *he shall come in the glory of his Father with the holy angels,* Mark viii. 38. But what their ministry is to be in that great day, I shall hereafter have occasion to shew, when I come to discourse of that solemn transaction.

And now having explained the ministry of the good angels under Christ, I proceed to treat of the ministry of the evil angels to him, which principally consists in these four particulars:

First, In trying and exercising the virtues of his subjects.

Secondly, In chastening and correcting their faults and miscarriages.

Thirdly, In searing and hardening his incorrigible rebels.

Fourthly, In executing his vengeance on them in another world.

I. The ministry of evil angels to Christ consists

in trying and exercising the virtues of his subjects: for this being the state of our trial and probation, wherein we stand candidates for those everlasting preferments in the other world, our blessed Lord hath thought meet to surround us with difficulties and temptations, that so, being in continual conflict with them, we may never want opportunity to exert and exercise our virtues, and to give the most glorious proofs of our courage and constancy: for difficulty is the spur of endeavour and the whetstone of virtue, without which the fairest graces that belong to human nature would be altogether useless, worthless, and unactive; such as faith and patience, temperance and equanimity, courage, and resignation to God; all which would scarce deserve the name of virtues, if they had not some difficulties to contest withal. Now one of the greatest difficulties with which our blessed Lord tries and exercises these graces of our nature is the temptations of evil spirits, who, as so many assisting geniuses to the corrupt inclinations of our nature, are permitted by him to rove about the world in innumerable swarms to tempt and elicit those inclinations into action; and these being spirits, have a much nearer access to the souls of men than any material agents whatsoever; for though they are totally debarred from all kind of intercourse with the immediate operations of the reasonable soul, and can no more look into its thoughts than we can into the bowels of the earth, yet our fancies and imaginations lying open to them, there is no doubt but they can and oftentimes do make what use they think fit of the animal spirits there, and dispose, and order, and distinguish them, just as the painter doth his numerous colours that

lie confusedly before him in their several shells, into the pictures and phantasms of whatsoever objects they please, and continue and repeat those pictures in our fancies as long and as oft as they think meet; and then considering what the natural use of the fancy is, both to the understanding and will, and how it prompts the one with matter of invention, and supplies it with variety of objects to work on, and draws forth or elicits the other to choose or refuse those objects it presents, according as they are amicably or odiously represented; considering these things, I say, it is notorious what mighty advantages the evil spirits have of insinuating their black suggestions to our minds. And then they being very subtile and sagacious by nature, and having had above five thousand years' experience to cultivate their talent of tempting and seducing us, (that having been their trade ever since they became devils) to be sure they can never be at a loss when or how to apply themselves to us, and to nick us with such temptations as are most convenient to our several inclinations, conditions, and circumstances; and accordingly, 2 Cor. ii. 11. the Devil is said to have his methods or devices, i. e. his stated rules by which he governs his mischievous practice of tempting and seducing souls; and 2 Tim. ii. 26. we are told of *the snare of the Devil*, or his crafty devices to entangle and captivate men's souls.

Now though the design of these evil spirits in tempting Christ's subjects is doubtless to seduce and ruin them, yet it is evident that the design of Christ in permittiug them to tempt them is only to try and exercise them, and rouse them out of their sloth and inactivity, and by the continual alarms of these their

restless adversaries to keep them upon their guard, and make them more watchful and vigilant: and accordingly, from the consideration of that permission which these evil spirits have to tempt us, we are in scripture frequently exhorted to activity and vigilance: so 1 Pet. v. 8. *Be sober, be vigilant; for the Devil your adversary goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour:* so also, Ephes. vi. 11. *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil.* Since therefore the Devil's tempting us is used by Christ as a motive to excite our activity, it is evident that Christ's intention in permitting him to tempt us is to excite and stimulate us thereunto. It is true, the Devil's temptations may, and often have a quite contrary effect on us than Christ intended; they may seduce us from our innocence and duty, and thereby involve us in everlasting perdition: but if they do, it is our own fault, and through our own consent, without which they can never prevail against us; for we are assured, that if we *resist the Devil, he will fly away from us*, and that *we shall not be tempted by him above what we are able;* and we are furnished by our Saviour with sufficient strength and assistance to repel his most powerful temptations: but if, instead of employing our strength and exercising our virtue in a vigorous resistance of him, (which is the thing Christ intended in permitting him to tempt us,) we will tamely suffer ourselves to be led captive by him, we must thank ourselves for all the dire and miserable consequents of it.

II. Another instance of the ministry of these evil angels to Christ, is their chastening and correcting

the faults and miscarriages of his subjects. Thus upon great and high provocations he many times lets loose these evil spirits upon us, and permits them to pain and punish us, either immediately by themselves, or mediately by their instruments: for so, only to prevent St. Paul's being *exalted above measure through the abundance of his revelations, there was given a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him;* i. e. as it seems most probable, some evil spirit was sent to him from Satan, the prince of devils, to inflict some corporal pain or disease on him, (for so *the grieving thorn*, Ezek. xxviii. 24. signifies a sore bodily affliction;) and though *he sought the Lord thrice for this thing that it might depart from him*, yet could he receive no other answer but, *My grace is sufficient for thee:* see 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8, 9. And it is very probable that those weaknesses, diseases, and deaths, which were inflicted on the Corinthians for their irreverent communication of the Lord's supper, (vide 1 Cor. xi. 30.) were inflicted by the ministry of evil angels, to whose power and malice they were abandoned by our Saviour, as a just chastisement of their profaneness: for so it is evident the incestuous person was corrected upon the sentence of his excommunication, which was, that he should be *delivered up unto Satan for the destruction of his flesh*, 1 Cor. v. 5. where the delivering him up to Satan seems to have been in answer to Satan's demanding of him; for so in scripture the Devil is sometimes called *the accuser of the brethren, which accuses them before God day and night*, Rev. xii. 10. and sometimes the ἀντίδικος, which signifies *an adversary in court of judicature*, that impleads and accuses

us before God, 1 Pet. v. 8. Now this accusation of his is sometimes false and groundless, as in the case of Job, upon which account he is called διάβολος, *the calumniator;* but sometimes he accuses us truly, for faults that are real and highly criminal, upon which he requires us of God, as he did St. Peter, Luke xxii. 31. i. e. he requires us as the executioner does a malefactor, *to sift* or winnow *us as wheat,* i. e. to shake and afflict us: and whenever God is pleased to answer this request, he is truly said *to deliver us up to Satan:* and this power of delivering up to Satan such persons as are justly accused of great and scandalous sins, God hath communicated to his church, upon which delivery in the primitive ages, (when there were no magistrates to second the church's censures with corporal punishments,) Satan, as the lictor, or executioner of our Saviour, immediately seized the criminal, and inflicted on him some bodily disease or torment, which St. Ignatius calls κόλασις διαβόλου, *the punishment of the Devil,* Epist. ad Roman. For so in our Saviour's time, and before and after it, it was usual for evil spirits, by God's permission, to inflict diseases and torments on men's bodies, of which there are innumerable instances in the Gospels and the writings of the primitive fathers: and that this was then the usual consequence of excommunication is evident from that phrase, *for the destruction of the flesh,* which plainly signifies some corporal punishment consequent to that tremendous sentence, which is therefore called *a rod,* 1 Cor. iv. 21. because of the bodily correction that followed it.

But since the power of corporal punishments hath been derived by Christ upon Christian magistrates, he very rarely chastens his subjects with any bodily

pains by the immediate agency of evil spirits, but hath wholly deposited it in the hands of the temporal powers, who are now his sole *ministers and revengers, to execute wrath upon those that do evil.* But yet still upon occasion he so far makes use of the ministry of the devils in correcting us, as to permit them to excite wicked men, and especially wicked princes and governors, to plague and persecute us. When he sees his church, or any particular part of it, degenerating from the purity of his religion, or waxing cold and remiss in their love and duty to him, he many times gives a loose to these malignant spirits, who always burn with inveterate rancour against it, and permits them to provoke and stimulate its enemies to exert and employ their power against it: so that whatsoever mischiefs wicked princes or men do to the church of Christ, or to any part of it, they do it only as the instruments of these evil angels, and by their mischievous suggestions and instigations; for so Christ tells the church of Smyrna, in Rev. ii. 10. *The Devil shall cast some of you into prison*; that is, The wicked governors there shall do it by the instigation of the Devil, to whom I will certainly give permission to instigate them thereunto: for so Christ is said to *have the keys of the bottomless pit*, Rev. i. 18. that is, power to confine or let loose those evil spirits that inhabit it, at his pleasure: and when he thinks fit to confine them, we find the church enjoys peace, and rest, and prosperity, Rev. xx. 1—4. But no sooner doth he let them loose again, but they are immediately instigating the wicked powers of the earth to fight against it and persecute it, ibid. ver. 7—9. From whence it is evident, that the power of these evil spirits to excite

evil princes or men to persecute his church, is under the restraint and determination of our Saviour; that they can proceed no farther in this their mischievous design, than he thinks meet to permit them; and consequently, that in all those persecutions to which they excite their instruments, they are but the ministers and executioners of Christ, even as the dog is the shepherd's in worrying the straying sheep into the fold.

III. Another instance of the ministry of evil spirits to Christ is, their hardening and confirming incorrigible and obstinate sinners in their wicked purposes: for when, notwithstanding all those powerful methods, which, in the administration of his government, Christ uses to reduce and reclaim men, they still persist in their rebellion; when they have conquered his grace, quenched his Spirit, broke through all his persuasions, and baffled all his arts of saving them, he many times withdraws from them those powerful aids of his Spirit and of his holy angels, which they have wilfully neglected, and utterly abandons them to the powers of darkness, whom from thenceforth he freely permits to tempt and seduce them, and to toll them on at their pleasure from sin to sin, and from one degree of sin to another, till they have filled up the measure of their iniquities: and this, without doubt, is the severest punishment that Christ inflicts upon sinners on this side hell: for this is a kind of damnation above ground, to be delivered up alive to those restless furies, who, having free leave to back and ride us at their pleasure, to be sure will never cease stimulating and spurring us on from wickedness to wickedness, till they have leaped us headlong into the everlasting burnings.

And this, I conceive, is the meaning of God's hardening sinners, so often mentioned in the holy scripture, which doth not at all imply, that God, by any positive act of his own, infuses any sinful quality into men's wills, to excite or stimulate them to sin, as some men have blasphemously enough asserted; *for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:* but when men have a long while hardened themselves against all the powerful impressions of his grace, and in the pursuit of their wicked courses have turned a deaf ear to all his persuasions to the contrary, then, as a just punishment of their incorrigible obstinacy, he many times withdraws from them the influences of his grace, and *delivers them up to Satan*, or, which is the same thing, permits him to seize them as his own, and to take possession of them, and, as a wicked soul, to animate and act them in all their wickedness: for so the Devil is said ἐνεργεῖν, to *work in the children of disobedience*, so that these children of disobedience are a sort of ἐνεργούμενοι, or persons that are possessed and acted by the Devil. And too many deplorable instances there are of wicked men that sin on at that rate, as if they were really acted by some diabolical genius, that are hurried into such monstrous extravagancies of wickedness, as are neither pleasant, nor profitable, nor reputable; so that they gratify no passion or appetite in human nature by committing them, but do seem to sin merely for the sake of sinning, out of a kind of preternatural malice, when they can scarce give any other reason to themselves why they do such an action, but only this, because it is wicked; so truly diabolical is their love of wickedness, so abstract from all those motives which are wont to af-

fect the passions and appetites of men, that it is hardly resolvable into any other reason, but that they are delivered up by God to be informed and acted by the Devil; who, having once obtained the possession of them, continually plies them with temptation, and never ceases urging and pressing them forward from one degree of wickedness to another, till at length he hath seared and hardened them into final and incurable impenitence. And this in particular was the case of Judas, who having long persisted in his thievery and sacrilege, notwithstanding all those warnings and admonitions our Saviour had given him to the contrary, was at length abandoned to that Devil to whose temptations he had been so obsequious; upon which it is said, that *the Devil entered into him*, Luke xxii. 3. and the Devil being in possession of him, immediately provokes and irritates him to the foulest and most horrible villainy that ever any mortal creature was guilty of; for so, John xiii. 2. we are told, that *the Devil put it into the heart of Judas to betray Christ.* But as yet, it seems, he was not totally abandoned to the Devil, who had only permission to make that black and dire proposal to him; after which our Saviour attempts, by the most pathetic persuasions, to prevent his compliance, Mark xiv. 21. notwithstanding which, the wretch being still enticed by his own covetousness to listen to that horrid suggestion, our Saviour having marked him out for a traitor, by giving him the sop, it is said again, that *Satan entered into him;* and upon this second entrance our Saviour gives him up for desperate; for, *That thou doest,* saith he, *do quickly*, John xiii. 27. As much as if he had said, Now I find the Devil has the full posses-

sion of thee, and that henceforth there remains no more hope of reclaiming thee: go therefore and despatch thy wicked purpose as soon as thou pleasest. So that now, it seems, he was entirely delivered up to the Devil; who thereupon immediately hurries him to the execution of his black design.

IV. And lastly, Another instance of the ministry of evil spirits to Christ, is their executing his vengeance on incorrigible sinners in the other world. For since, as I have shewn before, our Saviour makes use of the power and malice of these evil spirits to correct and chasten men in this life, why may we not thence conclude, that he makes use of the same to plague and punish them in the life to come; especially considering that they bear the same malice to us in the other life that they did in this; for they tempt us to sin here for no other end but that they may make us miserable there; and therefore to be sure that same malice of theirs which excites them now to contribute all they can to our sin, will equally provoke them then to contribute all they can to our misery, and render them altogether as active in tormenting us in hell as they were in tempting us upon earth; and then, considering that spirits can act upon spirits, as well as bodies upon bodies, and that the more powerful any spirit is, the more vigorously it can act upon other spirits, we may be sure that those evil spirits, being angels by nature, are incomparably more powerful than the souls of men, and therefore can act upon them with unspeakably more force and vigour than one soul can on another: for the weaker any spirit is, the more passive it must necessarily be to those spirits that are stronger and more powerful; and therefore, by how much weaker wicked souls are

than wicked angels, by so much more passive must they be to their power, and consequently be so much more liable to be vexed and tormented by them: and since in all probability the disproportion which nature hath made between the power of angels and souls is far greater than that which sin hath made between the power of one angel and another, we may reasonably conclude, that wicked souls are far more impressible by the power of wicked angels, than wicked angels are by the power of good angels; and therefore, since the good angels can make such violent impressions upon the wicked ones as they are not able to endure, but are still forced to fly before them, as oft as they encounter them, what intolerable impressions can wicked angels make upon wicked souls, when they are abandoned by God to their malice and fury! for though our souls are no more impressible by corporeal action than the beams of the sun are by the blows of a hammer, yet that they can feel the force of spiritual action we find by every day's experience: for so a thought, which is a spiritual action, if it be very horrible or dismal, doth as sensibly pain and aggrieve our souls as the most exquisite corporeal torment can our bodies. Now there is no doubt but evil spirits can suggest preternatural horrors to our minds, and repeat and urge them with such importunity and vehemence, as to render them most exquisitely painful and dolorous: of the truth of which we have a woful example in that miserable wretch Francis Spira, who, upon that woful breach he made in his conscience by renouncing his religion, notwithstanding he had received several kind admonitions from heaven to the contrary, was forsaken of God,

and delivered up alive into the hands of those dire tormentors of souls; whereupon, though he had not the least symptom of bodily melancholy, he was immediately seized with such an inexpressible agony of mind, as amazed his physicians, astonished his friends, and struck terror into all that beheld him; for he was so near to the condition of a damned spirit, that he verily believed hell itself was more tolerable than those invisible lashes that his soul endured without any intermission; and therefore he often wished that he were in hell, and as often attempted to despatch himself thither, in hope to find sanctuary there from those direful thoughts which continually preyed upon his soul. Now that these horrors were inflicted on him by a diabolical suggestion is evident, both by the impenetrable hardness and obstinacy of his mind against all the motives of repentance that accompanied them, and by the horrible blasphemies they frequently extorted from him. And if now in this life they have so much power to torment our minds, whenever God thinks it meet to let them loose upon us, what will they have hereafter, when our wretched spirits shall be utterly abandoned to their mercy, and they shall have a free scope to exert their fury on us, and glut their hungry malice with our torment and vexation! And since it is evident they do not want power, we may certainly conclude, even from that natural malignity that is in the temper of a devil, they do not want will, to plague and torture us in the other world. And this will and power of theirs our Saviour makes use of as the common executioner of his vengeance upon incorrigible sinners in the other life: for as soon as ever a wicked soul departs from its body, it is imme-

diately consigned into the hands of those diabolical furies, who, like so many hungry hounds, seize it with infinite greediness, and fall a tearing and worrying it with horrible suggestions without any pause or intermission; and by continually recording its sins to it, and reproaching it with the folly of them, and putting it in mind of that dismal eternal futurity it must suffer for them, do incessantly sting and vex it with swarms of dire reflections and tormenting thoughts, which are the only instruments of torment that can fasten upon a soul. And hence, in Matth. xviii. 34. the devils, to whom the wicked servant was delivered up by his master for his cruelty toward his fellow-servant, are called *tormentors*, as being the ministers of our Saviour's just vengeance upon wicked and incorrigible offenders.

And thus having shewn at large, that the good and bad angels are the ministers of Christ, and wherein their ministry to him consists, I proceed to the

III. Third sort of the ministers of Christ's kingdom, viz. the kings and governors of the world: for though there are many infidel kings in the world that know not Christ, and that never submitted themselves to his empire, but instead of that do openly defy and persecute his holy religion, yet these of right are subject to him, though in fact they are enslaved to the Devil, and he hath the disposal of their crowns and the command of their power, and doth actually employ and use it, even as he doth the power of the devils, in the prosecution of the righteous ends of his government. And though too many of those kings who, by their visible profession of Christianity, have actually submit-

ted themselves to the sceptre of Christ, have yet, together with Christianity, espoused the interest of sundry antichristian principles, in pursuance of which they have been as inveterate enemies and persecutors of *the truth as it is in Jesus*, as any of the heathen kings or emperors; yet these also, notwithstanding their maleadministration, are the subjects and ministers of our Saviour; and it is by his authority and commission that they reign, and by his omnipotent providence that all their wicked designs and actions are overruled to gracious ends and purposes; so that all the sovereign powers of the earth are subjected by God to the dominion of our Saviour; and in their respective kingdoms and empires are only his substitutes and vicegerents: for so we are told, not only that *all judgment is committed to him*, and that *all power is committed to him in heaven and earth;* and that he *is heir of all things*, and hath *power over all flesh;* but also that he is *King of kings, and Lord of lords, the only Potentate, the Head of all principality and power*, and the *Prince of all the kings of the earth;* and so the fathers of the council of Ariminum tell Constantius the Arian emperor, that it was by Christ's donation that he held his empire, *δι' οὗ* [Χριστοῦ] *σοι καὶ τὸ βασιλεύειν οὕτως ὑπῆρξεν, ὡς καὶ τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς οἰκουμένης κρατεῖν*: By him, i. e. Christ, thou art appointed to reign over all the world. Upon which account Liberius advises him, *Μὴ μάχου πρὸς τὸν δεδωκότα σοι τὴν ἀρχὴν ταύτην, μὴ ἀντ' εὐχαριστίας ἀσεβήσῃς εἰς αὐτὸν*, Do not fight against Christ, who hath bestowed his empire upon thee; do not render him impiety instead of gratitude. And to the same purpose Athanasius tells us, *Λαμβάνων οὖν ὁ Χριστὸς τὸν*

θρόνον, μετέστησεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἔδωκε τοῖς ἁγίοις χριστιανῶν βασιλεῦσιν ἐπαναστρέψαι τούτους ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰακώβ: i. e. That Christ having received the throne, hath translated it from heathen to holy Christian kings, to return them back to the house of Jacob. So that both from scripture and the current doctrine of the primitive church, it is evident that all the sovereign powers upon earth are subjected to our Saviour, and are only the ministers and viceroys of his universal kingdom.

But for the farther prosecution of this argument, I shall shew, in the first place, that by this their subjection to Christ they are not deprived of any natural right of their sovereignty; and secondly, that they are obliged by it to certain ministries in the kingdom of Christ.

First, That by their subjection they are not deprived of any natural right of their sovereignty; for when our Saviour pronounced the sentence, *Give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's*, he thereby renewed the patent of sovereign powers, and reinvested them in all the natural rights of their sovereignty, which doubtless are included in *the things that are Cæsar's:* for upon the Pharisees asking him that captious question, *Is it lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar?* he doth not answer, Yes, it is lawful; which yet had been a sufficient reply to their question; but calls for a tribute penny, and having asked them whose image and superscription that was upon it, and being answered, Cæsar's; he returns them an answer much larger than their question, *Give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's:* i. e. It is certain that you are obliged, not only to pay tribute to Cæsar, but also to render him whatever

else is due to him by virtue of his sovereign power; for sovereign power being immediately founded on the dominion of God hath from thence these two unalienable rights derived to it, to which all the essential rights of sovereignty are reducible: first, to command in all things as it judges most convenient for the public good, where God hath not countermanded; for the power of sovereigns descending from God can only be limited by God or themselves; for if they are limitable by any other power, they are subjects to that power, and so can no longer be sovereigns; and if they are limitable only by God or themselves, then where they are not limitable either by God or themselves, they must necessarily have a right to command. Secondly, the other unalienable right that is derived to them from God is, to be accountable only to God: for by deriving to them sovereign power, God hath exalted them above all powers but his own: and therefore, since no power can be accountable but to a superior power, and since sovereigns have no superior power but God, it is to God only, from whom they received their power, that they are accountable for the administration of it. These therefore are the natural rights of sovereign powers, and these rights remain entire and inviolate in them, notwithstanding their subjection to the mediatorial sceptre of our Saviour; as I shall endeavour to shew in the particulars.

First, Therefore by this their subjection to Christ they are not deprived of their natural right of commanding in all cases as they shall judge most convenient for the public good, where God hath not countermanded them: for the Christian religion is so far from any way retrenching the power of princes, that

it abundantly confirms and enforces it, by requiring us to *submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; to be subject to the higher powers,* and that *not only for wrath, but for conscience sake;* to *submit to principalities and powers, and to obey magistrates;* to *render tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour;* i. e. to submit to all the lawful impositions of our princes, whether it be of taxes or of any other matter whatsoever; and in all the New Testament there is only one limitation made of our obedience, which is a natural and eternal one, and that is, that *we ought to obey God rather than man;* that is, when man's command and God's do apparently clash and interfere with each other: for in this case the magistrate hath no right to be obeyed, because his will is countermanded by a superior authority: by which exception this general rule is confirmed, that in all cases whatsoever, whether temporal or spiritual, civil or ecclesiastical, sovereign powers have an unalienable right to be obeyed. For if their right to be obeyed in the kingdom of Christ extended only to civil and temporal causes, their authority would be very much lessened and retrenched by their subjection to our Saviour; since before their subjection to him it undoubtedly extended to all causes whatsoever; because being sovereign under God, it could have no other bounds or limits but what God had set to it; and therefore, since before their subjection to Christ God had bounded their authority by no other law but that of nature, it must either be made appear that the law of nature did then limit their authority only to civil causes, (which I am sure is impossible,)

or it will necessarily follow, that it extended also to spiritual and ecclesiastical; and if it did so then, it must do so still, unless it be made appear that Christianity hath retrenched and lessened it. It is true, Christ hath erected a standing form of spiritual government in his church; and it is as true, that all government, whether spiritual or temporal, includes a legislative power in it, or a power of commanding its subjects: but this is no limitation of the commanding power of sovereign princes, who must still be obeyed in all things where Christ hath not countermanded, though the church should command the contrary; for Christ never authorized the governors of his church to control the commanding power of princes, but hath left all matters of indifference as absolutely to their disposal and determination as ever they were before his spiritual government was erected; and matters of indifference are the sole matter both of purely civil and purely ecclesiastical laws; and therefore, after the church by its legislative power hath restrained any matter of indifference, the civil sovereign, in whose disposal all matters of indifference are, may, if he see good occasion, release and free it again, and impose the contrary matter of indifference; and if he doth so, all Christian people are obliged, by the express commands of scripture, to obey him; for the scripture commands of obedience to the temporal sovereignty have no such exception as this annexed to them, *Except the church command the contrary.* And in matters of duty what have we to do to make exception where God hath made none? And indeed where there are two legislative powers, the one must necessarily be subject to the other, or it will be impossible for the subject, in

many cases, without sinning to obey either. For whenever the commands of the civil state do happen to clash with the commands of the church, either the church must be obliged to submit to the state, or the state to the church, or the subject cannot possibly obey the one without sinning against the other. If it be said, that the church must submit to the state in things appertaining to the state, and the state to the church, and so both are supreme in their own province, I would fain know what is to be done when these two powers differ about the things which appertain to the one and to the other. The state saith, This appertains to me, and so commands it. The church saith, This appertains to me, and so forbids it. Now in this case it is certain that one or the other must be obliged to give way, or the subject can neither obey nor disobey either without sinning; and which soever of the two it be that is obliged to give way, by virtue of that obligation it must be subjected to the other: so that now the question is only this, Which of the two legislative powers is supreme? And it would be impertinent to say, that they are both supreme in their proper province, the one in civil, and the other in spiritual causes, because it is in suspense whether the cause in which they countermand each other be civil or spiritual; so that in this case I must either be obliged to obey neither, which is notoriously false, or, whatsoever the cause be in itself, to yield obedience to the one, and to disobey the other; and if I must obey the civil power, whether the cause be civil or spiritual, then the civil power must be supreme in both; as on the contrary, if I must obey the church power, whether the cause be spiritual or civil, it will as necessarily follow that the church pow-

er is supreme in both. Which latter we are sure is false, as the scripture is true; for in civil matters it is agreed on all hands that the scripture concludes all men, as well clergy as laity, under the obligation of obedience to the civil sovereign, and that none are exempt; no not the apostles themselves, or the bishops succeeding them in the spiritual government, whether we consider them separately or conjunctly: and if in all civil causes I am obliged to obey the command of the civil power, then it is most certain that if the case in contest between that and the spiritual power be really civil, I am obliged to disobey the countermand of the spiritual power; but if on the contrary I must disobey the command of the civil power, supposing the cause to be spiritual, which way can I turn myself without danger of sinning: so that unless one of these two powers are supreme in both causes, whenever any cause happens to be contested between them, (as to be sure many must between two rival powers,) I can neither obey nor disobey without sinning against one or both: and can we imagine that God, who is the God of order, and not of confusion, would ever involve us in such inextricable difficulties by subjecting us to two supreme powers that are subject to clash and interfere with one another? Wherefore, although, as I shall shew by and by, the church is invested with a legislative power, whereby it can restrain things that were free and indifferent for its own security, and decency, and order; yet this power is subordinate to the civil legislation, (which is in all causes supreme,) and cannot enact against it, control and countermand it in any indifferent matter, whether temporal or spiritual, but stands obliged to recede to

the civil sovereign, who hath the supreme disposal of all indifferent things, and in all contested cases to veil its authority to his.

And accordingly we find that during the first three hundred years, when the civil powers were enemies to Christianity, and did no otherwise concern themselves with it than to ruin and extirpate it, the church made laws for itself, and by its own legislative power enacted whatsoever it judged convenient or necessary for its own security or edification; but yet it never presumed in any indifferent matter to contradict the laws of the empire; nor did ever any Christian, because he was a subject of the church, refuse to obey his prince in any case whatsoever, where God had not countermanded him; as is most evident from hence; because in all the history of those times we do not find one instance of any Christian that suffered for so doing. In those days there were no martyrs for indifferent things, which to be sure there must have been, had the church then taken upon it to determine indifferences contrary to the edicts of the emperor: but the only thing they then suffered for was their refusal to disobey the express will of God, in compliance with the wicked wills of men: which is an unanswerable argument, that in those days the church never assumed to itself any supreme authority over indifferent things, either in spirituals or temporals, but left that in those hands where God had placed it, viz. in the hands of the civil sovereign, with whose imperial laws its canons never interfered, with whose legislative power it never justled for the wall, but cheerfully submitted to it in all things wherein it was not determined to the contrary by the ex-

press will of God. And when afterwards the civil sovereign embraced Christianity, he did not thereby divest himself of his supremacy over all indifferent things in all causes whatsoever, but by his own authority he not only convened general councils, and for the most part presided in them, (as particularly in that of Ephesus, Chalcedon, the sixth general one in Constantinople, called Trullo, and several others,) and enforced their canons with his own imperial edicts, but many times made laws, even in church-matters, without them; to which the ecclesiastical governors yielded the same obedience as they did to the decrees of the most œcumenical councils; for so, not only Constantine, who was the first Christian emperor, made laws concerning the festivals of the church, ordaining what might and what might not be done upon the Lord's day; and not only several of those ecclesiastical laws in Gratian's collection are now confessed on all hands to be the laws of princes, but the first titles of the code are all of them concerning ecclesiastical matters; and so also in the laws of the Goths and Vandals, the authentics and capitulars of the French kings, there are numerous instances of the legislative power of kings in ecclesiastical matters; and this power was openly asserted by the French ambassadors in the council of Trent, viz. that the kings of France, following the examples of other Christian emperors, had frequently made laws for the church, which were so far from being countermanded by the bishops of Rome, that they received many of them into their own canons; and that the Gallican church had been always governed by the ecclesiastical laws which were made by their kings: and cardinal Cusanus tells us, lib. ii. Cath.

Concord. c. 40. that he himself had collected eighty-six chapters of ecclesiastical laws, made by the ancient emperors; besides many others of Charles the Great and his successors, in which there are many things concerning the popes and all other patriarchs, declaring that he never read that ever any pope was asked to confirm those laws, or that ever they were accounted the less obligatory because they wanted the papal confirmation. And indeed before pope Hildebrand, who was the first bishop that challenged the supreme legislation in ecclesiastical affairs, it is notoriously known that the greatest prelates of the church frequently addressed themselves to the emperor for such good laws as the present necessities of the church called for. Thus pope Damasus entreated the emperor Honorius to make a law for the more regular election of the popes. Thus also Sergius, patriarch of Constantinople, supplicated the emperor Heraclius to forbid by a pragmatic sanction the admission of any man into the clergy, unless it were into a dead place; and it was (as it is thought) upon St. Ambrose's entreaty, that Theodosius made a law for the disannulling of marriages within the prohibited degrees: so when the emperor Justinian turned the ancient canons of the church into imperial laws, he was so far from being accused of being an usurper of the ecclesiastical power, that pope Adrian IV. highly extols him for so doing, though in his 123d Novel that emperor affirms, that μηδὲν ἄβατόν ἐστιν εἰς ζήτησιν τῇ βασιλείᾳ, "nothing is impervious to "the inspection and cognizance of the king;" in which St. Austin accords with him, when he affirms the kings do nothing but their duty, *cum in suo regno bona jubeant, mala prohibeant, non solum*

quæ pertinent ad humanam societatem, verum etiam quæ pertinent ad divinam religionem, i. e. "when they make good laws, not only concerning "human society, but also concerning divine reli-"gion." By all which it is evident, that the civil powers for several ages after they became Christians did claim and exercise a supreme legislative power in causes ecclesiastical as well as civil, and this without any contradiction from the bishops and governors of the church: for as for that saying, *Quid imperatori cum ecclesia?* "What hath the emperor "to do with the church?" it was not the language of the church, but of that firebrand Donatus, who was the ringleader of one of the most factious and turbulent heresies that ever infested the Christian world: and if in those instances wherein they exerted their legislative power in ecclesiastical causes, the church had no power to control or countermand them, then neither hath it in any other instance of the same nature: and if so, then, notwithstanding their subjection to our Saviour, they still retain their supreme commanding power over all matters of indifference, whether it be in civil or ecclesiastical causes. But then,

Secondly, By this their subjection to our Saviour, they are not deprived of their natural right of being unaccountable to any but to God alone, through Jesus Christ; for all the difference between the state of sovereign powers in this matter, before and after their subjection to Christ's mediatorial sceptre, is only this, that before they were accountable to God only immediately, whereas now they are accountable to God only through Jesus Christ: for Christ being authorized by God to mediate for him, or, which is

the same thing, to be his vicegerent in the world, all things are now subjected to him; and God now rules and judges, rewards and punishes all men by him, whether they are subjects or sovereigns, vassals or emperors; for so in the great transaction of the last day we are told that the kings of the earth shall be arraigned before his judgment-seat, Rev. vi. 15, 16, 17. But though they are now accountable immediately to Christ, who during this evangelical economy is to rule and judge for God; yet in respect of any earthly tribunal they remain altogether as sovereign and unaccountable as ever: for to be sovereign and unaccountable are convertible terms: and it is nonsense to say, either that any power is unaccountable which hath any superior, or that any power is accountable which is sovereign and supreme: so that by necessity of nature those powers which are sovereign upon earth must be unaccountable to any power upon earth; because to call to account is an act of superiority, and that which is supreme can have no superior to account to: so that unless it be made appear that Christ hath erected some earthly tribunal that is superior to the tribunals of the supreme civil powers, he must of necessity have left them as unaccountable as he found them. Now it is plain that our Saviour erected no other tribunal in this world, but only that of the spiritual or ecclesiastical government, which he was so far from advancing above the tribunal of the civil sovereign, that while he was upon earth he acknowledged himself to be subject and accountable thereunto, though he was then the supreme bishop and head of that spiritual regiment; and this he did not only by recognising Cæsar's right of receiving tribute

from him, of which I have spoken before, (for by bidding them *render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's*, he leaves sovereign princes in the quiet possession of all those rights which he found them possessed of, and requires their subjects to pay them whatsoever is essentially due to their sovereignty, and whatsoever the laws and customs of nations had before determined to be their right,) but also by acknowledging before Pilate the right of the civil tribunal to call him to account, John xix. 11. where he confesses that the power by which Pilate arraigned him was *given him from above;* and by reprehending St. Peter, for endeavouring by force to rescue him out of the hands of the civil powers: *Put up thy sword*, saith he, *into his place: for all that take the sword shall perish by the sword*, Matt. xxvi. 52. In which words it was far from his intention to prohibit the use of the sword either to governors, who, as St. Paul tells us, *bear not the sword in vain;* or to private persons in their own lawful defence; for he commands his own disciples to buy them swords to defend themselves against robbers and lawless cut-throats, who, as Josephus tells, did very much abound in those days, Luke xxii. 36. but all that he intended was, to forbid drawing the sword against lawful authority in any case whatsoever, though it were for the defence and security of his own person: for this was St. Peter's case, who in the defence of his Saviour resisted the high priest's officers, who came armed with a lawful authority to seize and apprehend him; in which our Saviour plainly owns himself accountable to the civil authority of his country: for if he had not been so, it could be no fault in St. Peter to endeavour to

rescue him from its ministers; and if Christ himself, while he was upon earth, were subject to the civil authority, what an high piece of arrogance is it for those who are at most but his vicars and ministers, to claim or pretend an exemption? And if it were so great a fault in St. Peter to draw his sword against lawful authority, though it were in the defence of his Saviour's person, then doubtless it is no less a fault in his successors to pretend a right from St. Peter to draw their swords against sovereign princes, though it be in the defence of their Saviour's religion. And as our Saviour owned himself subject and accountable to the civil tribunal, so St. Paul's injunction is universal, *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers;* and surely *every soul* must include the whole body of the clergy as well as of the laity, unless we can produce some clear and express exception to the contrary; and as the commands extend universally to all, so doth the reason of it also, *for the powers that are, are ordained of God;* and if we must be subject to them, because they rule by God's authority, then it is certain there are none that are subject to God, but are under the force and obligation of this reason. And then he goes on, *Whosoever resisteth the power,* (of whatsoever degree or order of men he be,) *resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation:* and if, according to the law of our Saviour, it be a damnable sin for any person or persons whatsoever to resist the civil authority, then it is a plain case, that our Saviour hath not at all depressed the sovereignty of the secular powers, by subjecting it to any superior tribunal; but hath left it as absolute and unaccountable

as ever it was before it was subjected to his empire. And thus having proved that sovereign princes are not divested of any natural right of their sovereignty by their subjection in the mediatorial sceptre of our Saviour, I proceed, in the

Second place, To shew what those ministries are which they are obliged to render to our Saviour, by virtue of this their subjection to him. In general it is foretold, that, upon their subjection to Christ, they should become *nursing fathers and nursing mothers* to his church, Isa. xlix. 23. that is, that they should tenderly cherish, protect, and defend it, and liberally minister to it whatsoever is necessary for its support and preservation: and to be sure Christ expects of them that they should accomplish this prediction by doing all those good offices to his church which the relation of a foster father or mother imports: for when God predicts any good thing of men, it is plain that he would have them be what he foretells they shall be; so that in this case the prophecy carries precept in it, and doth not only signify what shall be, but also what ought to be. When therefore God prophesies of kings, that they shall be *nursing fathers* to his church, he doth as well declare what they should be, as what they shall be; and so he foretells of them, and commands them in the same breath. If therefore we would know what those ministries are which Christ now requires sovereign powers to render to his church, our best way will be to inquire what those duties are which are implied in the relation of a foster father to his foster child. Now the duties of this relation may be all of them comprehended under these four particulars:

First, To protect and defend it against harms and injuries.

Secondly, To cultivate its manners with good precepts and counsels.

Thirdly, To correct and chasten its faults and irregularities.

Fourthly, To supply it with decent raiment and convenient sustenance: answerable to which, sovereign powers being constituted by our Saviour the foster fathers of his church, are, by virtue of this relation, obliged,

I. To protect and defend it in the profession and exercise of the true religion.

II. To fence and cultivate its peace and good order, either by wholesome laws of their own, or by permitting and requiring it to make good laws for itself, and, if need be, enforcing them with civil coercions.

III. To chasten and correct the irregular and disorderly members of it.

IV. To make provision for the decency of its worship, and for the convenient maintenance of its officers and ministers; which answers to the decent raiment and convenient sustenance with which the foster father is obliged to supply his foster child.

These particulars I shall but very briefly insist on, it being none of my province to instruct princes and governors.

I. One of those ministries which princes, by virtue of their subjection to Christ, are obliged to render to his church, is to protect and defend her in the profession and exercise of the true religion, that is, not only to permit her openly to profess the true religion, and to perform the public offices of it without

disturbance or interruption, but also to fence her with legal securities, and guard her with the temporal sword against the power and malice of such as would disturb and persecute her; and therefore sovereign powers are concerned above all things impartially to inquire and studiously to examine what the true religion is; lest being imposed upon by false pretences, they misemploy that power in the patronage of error, which was given them for the protection of the truth.

II. Another of those ministries which princes are obliged, by virtue of their subjection to Christ, to render his church, is to fence and cultivate its peace and good order, either by wholesome laws of their own, or by permitting and requiring it, when occasion requires, to make good laws for itself, and, if need be, by enforcing them with civil coercions: for so, when the church was either broken by schisms, or corrupted by errors and disorderly customs, it was always the practice of Christian kings and emperors, even from the time that they became Christians, to restrain and give a check to those divisions and disorders, either by their own royal and imperial edicts, or by convening the ecclesiastical governors to councils, there to consult and agree upon such good laws and expedients as the present necessities of the church required: and because these laws, being grounded upon more spiritual authority, could as such be enforced by no other penalties than spiritual, which by bold and obstinate offenders were frequently despised and disregarded, therefore those holy kings and emperors thought themselves obliged, as they were the ministers of Jesus, to strengthen and reinforce them with temporal sanctions and pe-

nalties, by which means they became the laws of the empire, as well as of the church: of all which I have given sufficient instances; and all this was no more than what they were obliged to by virtue of their subjection to Christ: for being subjected to him, they are his viceroys in the world, and do reign and govern by his authority: and since their authority is his, they must be accountable to him, if they do not employ it for him in ministering to the necessities of his church and kingdom; and therefore, if when it is in their power to check a prevailing schism or corruption in the church by wholesome laws and edicts, they refuse or neglect to do it, they must doubtless answer to him from whom they received their power, and who, being himself the supreme head of the church, hath constituted them its guardians and nursing fathers.

III. Another of those ministries which princes are obliged to render his church, is to chasten and correct the irregular and disorderly members of it; for though there are spiritual rods and corrections which Christ hath solely committed to the spiritual government, and which, if men understood and considered the dire effects and consequences of them, are sufficient to restrain and keep in awe the most obstinate offenders, yet when men are stupified in sin, and do feel nothing but only what pains or pleases their bodies, these spiritual corrections are insignificant to them, they being such as make no impression on their corporeal senses; and so, when men are hardened in schism or heresy, to be sure they will despise the ecclesiastical rods, as being confidently persuaded that they cannot be justly applied to them, and that where they are applied unjustly, they are only so many spi-

ritual scarecrows, that can only threaten, but not hurt them; and therefore in these cases the secular powers are obliged, by virtue of their subjection to Jesus, to second the spiritual with the temporal rod, and to awe such offenders with corporeal corrections as are fearless and insensible of the censures of the church. And conformable hereunto hath been the constant practice of all good kings and emperors, even from their first conversion to Christianity, as might easily be demonstrated by innumerable instances out of ecclesiastical history; for they not only made laws enforced with temporal penalties for the regulation of the clergy, as well as laity, not only commanded and obliged their bishops, in case of notorious neglect, to execute the church censures on the schismatical, heretical, and disorderly of both sorts; but when they found those spiritual executions ineffectual, they very often seconded them with temporal, such as pecuniary mulcts, imprisonments, and banishments: and though in the case of error and false belief they were always very tender and gentle, yet whenever they found men busily propagating their errors into sects and divisions, to the disturbances of the church's peace, they thought themselves obliged to restrain their petulancy with temporal chastisements. And indeed, as they are the viceroys of our Saviour, they are *ex officio* the conservators of the peace of his kingdom, and stand obliged to exert that authority he hath devolved upon them in the defence of its unity and good order, which in many cases they can no otherwise do, but only by restraining the schismatical and disorderly with the terror of temporal corrections; so that, as well in the church as in the civil state, they are *the*

ministers of God to us for our good; and therefore, if we do that which is evil, we have just cause to be *afraid; for they bear not the sword in vain: for they are the ministers of God, revengers to execute wrath upon them that do evil.* Rom. xiii. 14.

IV. And lastly, Another of those ministries which princes are obliged to render to Christ's church, by virtue of their subjection to him, is to make good provision for the decency of its worship, and for the convenient maintenance of its officers and ministers; to take care that it hath decent and commodious places set apart for the public celebration of its worship, and that those places be supplied with such ornaments and accommodations as are suitable to those venerable solemnities that are to be performed in them; that so its worship may not be exposed to contempt by the slovenliness and barbarity of its outward appendages. And this is the clothing of the church, which, as it ought not, on the one hand, to be too pompous and gaudy, that being naturally apt to distract and carnalize the minds of its votaries, and to divert their attention from those spiritual exercises, wherein the life and soul of its worship consists; so neither ought it, on the other hand, to be sordid and nasty, that being as naturally apt to prejudice and distaste men against it, and to create in their minds a loathing and contempt of it. Now the furnishing the church with such decent places and ornaments of worship, as do become the grave solemnities of a spiritual religion, being a matter of cost and charge, must necessarily belong to the civil powers, who alone can lay rates upon the subject, and have the sole command and disposal of the public purse: and therefore, by virtue of their subjection

to Christ, they are obliged to take care that such religious places and ornaments be provided as the decency and convenience of his worship do require. And then, as for the ministers and officers of his church, they are under the same obligation to take care, that they whose office it is to *serve at the altar, should live upon the altar;* and that according to the different stations and degrees wherein they are placed, that so they may neither be necessitated for a subsistence to involve themselves in secular affairs, and thereby to neglect their spiritual calling, which is burden enough of all conscience for any one man's shoulders; nor be tempted to base compliances with the lusts of men, and the iniquities of times for a maintenance; and that so religion itself may not be exposed to contempt through their wretched poverty and indigence who are the ministers of it, and who, for want of a fair and honourable subsistence, can never obtain credit and authority enough to do any considerable good in the world. And this is the food and sustenance of the church, without which it cannot long flourish either in true knowledge or true piety, but must insensibly wither away, and degenerate into barbarity and ignorance. And accordingly, if you consult ecclesiastical history, you will find that it was ever the practice of pious princes and emperors to take care both for the erecting of decent and convenient churches in all parts of their dominions for the celebration of divine worship, and to furnish them with all the decent accommodations and ornaments that were proper thereunto, and also for the endowing the bishops and pastors of the church with such honourable subsistences as becomes the port and dignity of their several orders and

offices; in which they did no more than what they stood obliged to, as they were the viceroys of Jesus, and the foster-fathers of his church, by virtue of which relation to it, they are bound in duty to supply it with decent raiment and convenient food. And now, having explained the subjection of the sovereign powers of the earth to our Lord and Saviour, and shewn what those ministries are which they are obliged to render to him in his kingdom, I proceed to the

Fourth and last sort of his ministers, by which he governs his kingdom, viz. the spiritual or ecclesiastical governors; in treating of which I shall endeavour these three things:

First, To shew that Christ hath erected a spiritual government to minister to him in his church.

Secondly, To shew in what hands this spiritual government is placed.

Thirdly, To shew what are the proper ministries of this government.

I. That Christ hath erected a spiritual government in his church. And indeed, supposing the church to be a regular and formal society, subsisting of itself, distinct from all other societies, it must necessarily have a distinct government in it; because government is essentially included in the very notion of all regular society, which, without rule and subjection, is not a formed society, but a confused multitude: for what else do we mean by a human society, but only such a company of men united together by such and such laws and regulations? But how can any company of men be united by laws, without having in it some governing power to rule by those laws, and exact obedience to them? So that

we may as well suppose a complete body without a head, as a regular society without a government. Now that the church is a regular society, utterly distinct from all civil society, is as evident as the truth of Christianity, which all along declares and recognises the law or covenant upon which it is founded, and by which it is united, to be divine, and consequently to be superior to, and independent upon, all civil laws: and if that which constitutes the church be divine law, and not civil, then the constitution of the church must be divine, and not civil; for that which makes us Christians, at the same time makes us parts of the Christian church; and that which makes all the parts of the church, makes the church itself; which is nothing but the whole, or collection of all the parts together: and therefore as we are not made Christians, so neither are we made a Christian church, by the laws of the commonwealth, but by the laws and constitutions of our Saviour, which were promulgated to the world long before there were any laws of the commonwealth to found a Christian church on; for there was a Christian church for three hundred years together, before ever it had the least favour or protection from the laws of nations. In all which time it subsisted apart from all other societies, and was as much a church or Christian society as it is now; and, as it is now, it is only a continued succession of that primitive church, and therefore, as to the constitution of it, must necessarily be as distinct now from all other societies, as it was then, when it subsisted not only apart from but against the laws and edicts of all other societies in the world. In short therefore since the church of Christ is founded on a charter and in-

corporated by a law that is utterly distinct from the charters and laws of all civil societies, it hence necessarily follows, that itself is a distinct society from them all; because that which individuates any society, or makes it a distinct body from all other societies, is the charter or law upon which it is founded; and accordingly our Saviour tells Pilate, when he asked him whether he was a king, that he was a king, indeed, but that *his kingdom was not of this world*, John xviii. 36. i. e. Though my kingdom be *in* this world, yet is it not *of* the world; for neither are the laws of it human, but divine; nor the powers of it external, but invisible; nor the rewards and punishments of it temporal, but spiritual and eternal.

From the whole, therefore, these two things are evident:

First, That government is essential to formed and regular societies.

Secondly, That the church of Christ is in the nature and constitution of it a formed and regular society, distinct from all other societies: from both which it necessarily followeth, that it must have a distinct government included in the very essence and being of it. And accordingly in the New Testament, besides the civil magistrates, we frequently read of spiritual and ecclesiastical governors; so, Heb. xiii. 17. there is mention made of the rulers that *watch for our souls*, and a strict injunction to *obey and submit ourselves to them;* and so again, in the 7th and 24th verses, and in 1 Tim. v. 17. the apostle speaks of *the elders that rule well*, who are to be *accounted worthy of double honour*. And indeed the Greek word ἐπίσκοπος, which signifies a *bishop* or *overseer*, doth in scripture always import a *ruler* or

governor; (vide Hammond, Acts i. note 1.) and therefore being applied, as it is frequently in the New Testament, to a certain order of men in the Christian church, it must necessarily denote them to be the rulers and governors of it; and this power to ἐπισκοπεῖν, i. e. oversee, and rule and govern the church, was derived to them from Christ the supreme Bishop of our souls, even by that commission he gave them, John xx. 21. *As the Father hath sent me, so send I you,* i. e. so I commission you with the same authority in kind to teach and govern in my kingdom, as I myself have received from the Father: and accordingly as Christ is called the Pastor or Shepherd, which name imports authority to govern his flock, (for so *to feed* and *to rule* are of the same significancy in Psalm lxxviii. 72. and Philo tells us, οἱ δὲ ποιμαίνοντες ἀρχόντων καὶ ἡγεμόνων ἔχοντες δύναμιν, i. e. that the name of *shepherds* implied ruling and governing power,) so they who were sent and commissioned by our Saviour are styled ἐπισκόπους ἐν ποιμνίῳ, the *bishops* and *overseers* or *shepherds in the flock to feed the church of God,* Acts xx. 28. and they are elsewhere commanded to *feed the flock of God, and to take the oversight thereof,* 1 Pet. v. 2. And as they are called the shepherds of Christ's flock, so they are also the stewards of his family, and as such they are constituted by him *the rulers of his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season,* Luke xii. 42. and elsewhere they are called governments or governors, (the abstract, as it is very usual in scripture, being put for the concrete,) 1 Cor. xii. 28. and their authority is said to be *given from the Lord,* 2 Cor. x. 8. and they are said to be our *rulers in the Lord,* i. e. by the Lord's

commission and authority, 1 Thess. v. 12. and as such they are commanded to *rule with diligence*, Rom. xii. 8. From all which it is abundantly evident, that the church of Christ is a formed society subsisting of itself, distinct from all other societies, under a distinct rule and government. But this I shall make yet more fully appear, when I come to treat of the several ministries which the governors of the church of Christ are obliged to render him.

I proceed therefore at present to the second thing proposed, which was, to inquire into the nature of this government, in what hands Christ hath placed it. Now the two main rival forms of church-government pretending to divine institution are the presbyterial and episcopal. The presbyterial is that which is seated in an equality or parity of church-officers; the episcopal is that which is placed in a superior order of church-officers, called bishops; to whom the other orders of presbyters and deacons are subject and subordinate: the latter of which, I shall endeavour to prove, is the true form of government instituted by our Saviour, and that,

First, From the institution of our Saviour.

Secondly, From the practice of the holy apostles.

Thirdly, From the punctual conformity of the primitive church to both.

Fourthly, From our Saviour's declared allowance and approbation of the primitive practice in this matter.

I. That the government of the church of Christ is episcopal, is evident from the institution of our Saviour, who in his lifetime instituted two distinct orders of ecclesiastical ministers, the one superior to the other, viz. that of the twelve apostles, and that

of the seventy or seventy-two disciples: for that these two were of distinct orders is evident from their being always distinguished from one another, and mentioned apart by different names and in different ranks and classes. For to what purpose should the scripture mention the twelve and the seventy so distinctly as it every where doth, if there were not some distinction in their office and employment; for in Luke vi. 13. we are told, that Christ *called unto him his disciples, and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles:* and Mark iii. 13, 14. it is said that *he called unto him whom he would,* that is of his disciples, *and ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach.* And what less can this imply, than that the twelve were separated by this call and ordination of Christ to some distinct office and employment from the rest of his disciples? And that the office of the twelve was superior to that of the seventy is evident, not only from their being still placed first in the catalogues of ecclesiastical officers, see Eph. iv. 11. 1 Cor. xii. 28. in the latter of which we are told that *God constituted in the church first apostles,* wherein the primary is attributed to the apostolical office; and not only from the particular care which Christ took of these twelve above the rest of his disciples both in praying for and instructing them, of which there are a great many notorious instances in the Gospels; but also from hence, that their immediate successors were for the most part chosen out of the seventy: for so Simeon the son of Cleophas succeeded St. James at Jerusalem; Philip, St. Paul at Cæsarea; Clement, St. Peter at Rome; and divers others of the seventy, according

to Dorotheus, Eusebius, and others of the fathers, succeeded the apostles after their death in the government of their several churches; and Matthias, who, as Eusebius, Epiphanius, and St. Jerom affirm, was one of the seventy that was chosen and ordained by the other apostles to succeed Judas in the apostolate, Acts i. 26. From whence it is evident, that the apostles were superior to the seventy, otherwise it would have been no advancement to the seventy to succeed them: for all that superiority which they acquired by their succession must necessarily be inherent in the apostles before they succeeded them; else how can they be said to succeed them in it? And if we suppose them to be equal with the apostles in office before they succeeded them, it is nonsense to say they succeeded them: for how can a man be said to succeed another in any office, who is actually vested with the same office before he succeeds him? If therefore the seventy received no more power after the apostles, than they had under them, they were as much apostles before they succeeded them, as after: but if they did receive more power, then the apostles, to whom they succeeded, had more power than they before they received it, and consequently were their superiors; because a man can receive no more power by succeeding another in any office, than he to whom he succeeds had before, by virtue of the same office. By all which it is most evident, that by the institution of our Saviour the apostles were superior to the seventy; and yet it is as evident that the seventy were ecclesiastical ministers, as well as they; for in Luke x. 1. we are told, that *after these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two be-*

fore his face, that is, to preach his gospel. And that by this mission of his they were authorized to be the ministers of religion is evident from what he tells them, verse 16. *He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.* From whence it is plain that they were his authorized ministers, even as he was God's: because as the despising of him was a despising of God, by whom he was sent; so the despising of them was a despising of Christ, by whom they were sent: and accordingly, by virtue of this mission, we find them acting as authorized ministers of the gospel; for so Ananias, who was one of them, baptized Saul, Acts ix. 18. and Philip, who was another, preached and baptized at Samaria, Acts viii. 5.

So that here are plainly two sorts of ecclesiastical officers, the one superior to the other, of our Saviour's own institution and appointment; and therefore, if his institution be still valid, there must still be a superiority and subordination between the officers and ministers of his church, and consequently the government thereof must still be episcopal, i. e. by some superior officers presiding and superintending over other inferior ones. I know it is objected, that this superiority of the apostles over the seventy was only in office, but not in power or jurisdiction. But since it is the office that is the immediate subject of the power belonging to it, I would fain know, whether superiority of office must not necessarily include superiority in power; for office without power is an empty name that signifies nothing; and every degree of superiority of office must be accompanied with power to exert itself in acts of superiority, other-

wise it will be utterly in vain and to no purpose. So that either the superiority of the apostolic office over other church-offices must be void and insignificant, or it must have a proportionable superiority of power over them, inseparably inherent in it. But it is farther objected, that supposing the apostolate to be superior to the other ecclesiastical orders in power and office, yet it was but temporary, it being instituted by our Saviour in subservience to the present exigence and necessity of things, without any intention of deriving it down to the church in a continued succession. To which I answer in short, that this is said without so much as a plausible colour of reason; for they allow both that our Saviour instituted this office, and that in his institution he never gave the least intimation to the world that he intended it only for a certain season. Now if men will presume to declare Christ's institutions of Christianity, and even the least intimation of his will that he so designed them, they may with the same warrant repeal all the institutions of Christianity; and even the two sacraments will lie as much at their mercy as the institution of the apostolic order, which, unless they can prove it repealed by the same authority which established it, will be sufficient to prescribe to all ages and nations; for the obligations of divine commands are dissolvable only by divine countermands; and for men to declare any divine institution void before God hath so declared it, is to overrule the will of God by their own arrogant presumptions. For though the matter of the institution be mutable in itself, yet the form and obligation of it is mutable only by the authority which made it; and therefore, though God hath not declared that he in-

stituted it for perpetuity, yet till he declares the contrary, it must bind for perpetuity; especially if the reason of the institution of it be not apparently altered, which cannot be pretended in the case under debate, there being the very same reasons for a superiority and subordination between ecclesiastic officers now, as there was when our Saviour first appointed and instituted it. Until therefore they can shew either that the reason of the institution is ceased, or that the institution itself is repealed by some other law, (neither of which was ever yet pretended,) they may as reasonably dispense with most of the precepts of the gospel, (which are no more declared perpetual than this,) as with this of superiority and subjection among the ecclesiastical orders, which is the proper form of the episcopal government.

II. That the true government of the church is episcopal is evident also from the practice of the holy apostles, who, pursuant to the institution of our Saviour, did not only exercise that superiority in their own persons which their office gave them over their inferior clergy, but also derived it down with their office to their successors, which is a plain argument that they looked upon our Saviour's institution of this superior office of the apostolate, not as a temporary expedient, but as a standing form of ecclesiastical government, to be handed down to all succeeding generations. For though during our Saviour's abode upon earth, and some time after his ascension into heaven, the number of the apostles was confined to twelve, yet when afterwards, through their ministry, the church was spread and dilated, not only through Judea, but into the Gentile nations, they added to their number several other apostles, to

whom they communicated the same office and degree of superiority over the other clergy that our blessed Saviour had communicated to them: for so Eusebius, lib. i. cap. 11. Εἰθ' ὡς παρὰ τούτους κατὰ μίμησιν τῶν δώδεκα πλείστων ὅσων ὑπαρξάντων ἀποστόλων, i. e. Besides the twelve, there were many other apostles in that age, after the similitude of the twelve. And of the truth of this I shall give three or four instances.

The first is that of St. James of Jerusalem, the brother of Jesus, who though he was none of the twelve, (for in that number there were but two James's, viz. the son of Alpheus and the son of Zebedee, neither of which was he whom St. Paul calls the Lord's brother, and St. Paul reckons him apart from the twelve, 1 Cor. xv. 5, 6, 7.) is yet styled an apostle by St. Paul, Gal. i. 19. *but other apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.* And St. Jerom, in his comment on Isaiah, styles James the thirteenth apostle; that is, the first that was made an apostle after the twelve: and that he was not merely a nominal apostle, but actually endowed with apostolical power and superiority, is evident both from scripture and the unanimous consent of ecclesiastical history. From scripture it is evident, that this James was a man of great preeminence in the church of Jerusalem; for in the first council that was held there, we find him giving a decisive sentence in the matter of circumcision, Acts xv. For after there had been much disputing, ver. 7. and St. Peter, and St. Paul, and St. Barnabas had declared their judgment in the case, ver. 7—13. St. James, after a short preface, thus delivers himself; *Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them which from*

among the Gentiles are turned unto God: and this sentence of his determines the controversy, and puts a final end to all farther debate; which plainly argues his great authority and preeminence in that place. Again, Acts xxi. 17, 18. we are told, that when St. Paul and his company *were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received him gladly; and that the next day following Paul went in with them unto James, and all the elders were present.* Now for what other reason should Paul go in to James more especially, or upon what other account should all the elders be present with James, but that he was a person of the greatest note and figure in the church of Jerusalem; and for the same reason, in all probability, St. Paul mentions James before Peter and John, discoursing of a meeting he had with them at Jerusalem, Gal. ii. 9. because though Peter and John were two of the principal of the twelve apostles, and St. James was not so much as one of that number, yet in the church of Jerusalem he had the priority of them both. Now considering that St. James is called an apostle, and considering the preference he had in all these instances above the other apostles at Jerusalem, it is at least highly probable that he was peculiarly the apostle of the church of Jerusalem. But if to all this evidence we add the most early testimonies of Christian antiquity, we shall advance the probability to a demonstration; for by the unanimous consent of all ecclesiastical writers, St. James was the first bishop of Jerusalem: for so Hegesippus, who lived very near the times of the apostles, tells us, that James the brother of our Lord, called by all men the Just, received the church of Jerusalem from the apostles, (vid. Euseb. lib. ii. cap. 23.) So also St.

Clement, as he is quoted by the same author, l. ii. c. 1. tells us, that Peter, James, and John, after the assumption of Christ, as being the men that were most in favour with him, did not contend for the honour, but chose James the Just to be bishop of Jerusalem. And in the Apostolical Constitutions that pass under the name of St. Clement, (which though not so ancient as is pretended, yet are doubtless of very early antiquity,) the apostles are brought in thus speaking; "Concerning those that were ordained by us "bishops in our lifetime, we signify to you that they "were these: James the brother of our Lord was or-"dained by us bishop of Jerusalem," &c. So also St. Jerom, *de Script. Eccles.* tells us, that St. James, immediately after the passion of our Lord, was ordained bishop of Jerusalem by the apostles. And St. Cyril, who was afterwards bishop of that church, and therefore a most authentic witness of the records of it, calls St. James "the first bishop of that diocese," Catech. 16. To all which we have the concurrent testimonies of St. Austin, St. Chrysostom, Epiphanius, St. Ambrose, and a great many others: and St. Ignatius himself, who was an immediate disciple of the apostles, makes St. Stephen to be the deacon of St. James, *Ep. ad Trall.* and therefore, since Stephen was a deacon of the church of Jerusalem, St. James, whose deacon he was, must necessarily be the bishop of it.

Upon this account therefore St. James is called an apostle in scripture; because, by being ordained by the apostles bishop of Jerusalem, he had the apostolic power and authority conferred on him: for since it is apparent he was none of the twelve, to whom the apostleship was at first confined, he could no

otherwise become an apostle, than by deriving the apostleship from some of the twelve: and therefore since that apostleship which he derived from the twelve was only episcopal superiority over the church of Jerusalem, it hence necessarily follows, that the episcopacy was the apostleship derived and communicated from the primitive apostles.

The second instance of the apostles communicating their apostolic superiority to others is Epaphroditus, who, in Phil. ii. 25. is styled the apostle of the Philippians; *but I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and companion in labour, and fellow-soldier,* ὑμῶν δὲ ἀπόστολον, *but your apostle:* for so St. Jerom, Com. Gal. i. 19. *Paulatim, tempore præcedente, et alii ab his quos Dominus elegerat ordinati sunt apostoli, sicut ille ad Philippenses sermo declarat, dicens, Necessarium existimavi Epaphroditum,* &c. i. e. By degrees, in process of time, others were ordained apostles, by those whom our Lord had chosen, as that passage to the Philippians shews, *I thought it necessary to send unto you Epaphroditus your apostle.* And Theodoret upon the place gives this reason why he is here called the apostle of the Philippians; τὴν ἐπισκοπικὴν οἰκονομίαν ἐπεπίστευτο, ἔχων ἐπισκόπου προσηγορίαν, i. e. He was intrusted with episcopal government, as being their bishop. So that here you see Epaphroditus is made an apostle by the apostles, and his apostleship consists in being made bishop of Philippi.

A third instance is that of Titus, and some others with him, 2 Cor. viii. 23. *Whether any do inquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellowhelper concerning you: or our brethren be inquired of, they are* ἀπόστολοι ἐκκλησιῶν, *the apostles of the churches,*

and the glory of Christ; where it is plain, they are not called the apostles of the churches, merely as they were the messengers of the liberality of the churches of Macedonia; for it was not those churches, but St. Paul that sent them, ver. 22. and therefore, since they were not apostles in relation to those churches whose liberality they carried, it must be in relation to some particular churches over which they had apostolical authority. And that Titus had this authority over the church of Crete is evident both from St. Paul's Epistle to him and from primitive antiquity. As for St. Paul's Epistle, there are sundry passages in it, which plainly speak him to be vested with apostolical superiority over that church; so chap. i. ver. 5. *For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set things in order that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.* For in the first place St. Paul here gives him the supreme judgment of things that were wanting, with an absolute power to reform and correct them; which is a plain demonstration of his superiority in that church. Secondly, He authorizes him to *ordain elders in every city;* and whether these elders were bishops or presbyters is of very little consequence as to the present debate: for, first, it is of undoubted certainty, that there were presbyters in the church of Crete before Titus was left there by the apostle; and, secondly, it is as evident, that those presbyters had no power to *ordain elders in every city,* as Titus had; for if they had, what need St. Paul to have left Titus there for that purpose? What need he have left Titus there with a new power to do that which the presbyters before him had sufficient power to do? For if the presby-

ters had before the power of ordination in them, this new power of Titus's would have been not only in vain, but mischievous; it would have looked like an invasion of the power of the presbyters, for St. Paul to restrain ordination to Titus, if before him it had been common to the whole presbytery; and upon that account have rather proved an occasion of strife and contention, than an expedient of peace and good order. From hence therefore it is evident, that Titus had a power in the church of Crete which the presbyters there before him had not; and this power of his extended not only to the establishment of good order and the ordaining of elders, but also to *rebuking with all authority*, i. e. correcting obstinate offenders with the spiritual rod of excommunication, chap. ii. ver. 15. and taking cognizance of heretical pravity, so as first to admonish heretics, and in case of pertinacy to reject them from the communion of the church, chap. iii. ver. 10. From all which it is evident, that this apostolate of Titus consisted in his ecclesiastical superiority, which was the very same in the church of Crete that the first apostles themselves had in the several churches that were planted by them. And accordingly he is declared, by the concurrent testimony of all antiquity, to be the first bishop of that church. So Euseb. lib. iii. cap. 4. affirms him, *τῶν ἐπὶ Κρήτης ἐκκλησιῶν ἐπισκοπὴν εἰληχέναι*, to have received episcopal authority over the churches of Crete. So also Theodoret, in *Argum. Ep. ad Tit.* tells us, that he was ordained by St. Paul bishop of Crete; and so also St. Chrysostom, St. Jerom, and St. Ambrose, and several others of the fathers and ecclesiastical writers. This episcopal authority therefore which St. Paul gave Titus over the church of

Crete is another plain instance of the apostles making apostles, or deriving to others their apostolic power and superiority over particular churches.

The fourth and last instance I shall give is that of Timothy, who, as it appears by St. Paul's Epistles to him, had episcopal authority over the church of Ephesus; and this not only over the laity, to *command and teach them*, 1 Tim. iv. 11. to receive widows into the church's service, or reject and refuse them, 1 Tim. v. 4, 9, 16. and to oblige the women to go modestly in their apparel, and keep silence in the church, 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12. but also over the clergy, to take care that suitable provision should be made for them, 1 Tim. v. 17. that none should be admitted a deacon till after competent trial, nor ordained an elder till after he had well acquitted himself in the deaconship, 1 Tim. iii. 10, 13. to exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction over them, to receive accusations against them, and if he found them guilty, to put them to open shame, 1 Tim. v. 19, 20. And St. Paul charges him to exercise this his jurisdiction, *without preferring one before another, and without partiality*, ibid. ver. 21. which, if he had no jurisdiction over them, had been very impertinent. And as he had jurisdiction over the clergy concredited to him, so had he also the authority of ordaining them; for the due exercise of which St. Paul gives him that necessary rule, 1 Tim. v. 22. *Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins.* And that this authority of his in the Ephesian church, over both the laity and clergy, was given by St. Paul for a standing form of government there, is evident from hence, because it was conferred on him after the presbytery was formed and settled in that

church: for in planting and cultivating this large and populous church, which extended itself over all the proconsular Asia, St. Paul had laboured for three years together with incredible diligence; which is a much longer time than he spent in any other church; and therefore by this time to be sure he had not only constituted a presbytery in it, as he did in all other churches, Acts xiv. 23. but also reduced it to much greater perfection than any other, that so in the constitution of it, it might be a pattern to all other churches: and if so, then to be sure the government which he had now at last established in it was such as he intended should continue, viz. by a single person presiding over both clergy and laity. And that *de facto* it was so, we have not only the authority of St. Paul's Epistles to Timothy, but also the concurrent testimony of all ecclesiastical antiquity; for so Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 4. tells us, "he was the first bishop of the province, or dio-"cese, of Ephesus;" and the anonymous author of his life in Photius, that "he was the first that acted as "bishop in Ephesus," and that "he was ordained "and enthroned bishop of the metropolis of Ephesus "by the great St. Paul;" and in the council of Chalcedon twenty-seven bishops are said to have succeeded in that chair from Timothy, who was the first; and St. Chrysostom, Hom. 15. in 1 Tim. v. 19. tells us, "that it is manifest Timothy was intrusted with a "church, or rather with a whole nation, viz. that of "Asia," upon which account he is styled by Theodoret, in 1 Tim. iii. 1. Ἀσιανῶν ἀπόστολος Τιμόθεος, "Ti-"mothy the apostle of the Asiatics;" and (to name no more of the great numbers of authorities that might be cited) in the Apostolical Constitutions we are ex-

pressly told, that he was ordained bishop of Ephesus by St. Paul. This therefore is another evident instance of the apostles deriving down their apostolic authority. Other instances might be given; but these are sufficient to shew that the apostles did not look upon our Saviour's institution of a superior order of ecclesiastical officers as a temporary thing, that was to expire with them, but as a standing model of ecclesiastical government, since they derived to others that superiority over the churches of Christ which he communicated to them. For from all these instances it is most evident, both that the apostolical office did not expire with the twelve, but was transferred by them to others, and that that which is now called the episcopacy was nothing else but the apostolical office derived from the apostles to their successors; for in the primitive language of the church, bishops are generally styled apostles; for which no other reason can be assigned, but that they succeeded in the apostolical superiority. Thus, as hath been shewn before, St. James, Epaphroditus, Titus, and Timothy are styled apostles in scripture, and by the primitive writers; Clemens bishop of Rome, who was a disciple of the apostles, is called ἀπόστολος Κλήμης, i. e. "Clemens, the apostle," (vide *Clem. Alex. Strom.* lib. 4.) and Ignatius bishop of Antioch, ἀπόστολος καὶ ἐπίσκοπος, "apostle and bishop," by St. Chrysostom; and Thaddæus, who was sent by St. Thomas to the prince of Edessa, ἀπόστολος Θαδδαῖος, by Eusebius; and so are also St. Mark and St. Luke by Epiphanius; and Theodoret lays it down for a general rule, Τοὺς δὲ νῦν καλουμένους ἐπισκόπους, ἀποστόλους ὠνόμαζον. τοῦ δὲ χρόνου προίοντος τὸ μὲν τῆς ἀποστολῆς ὄνομα τοῖς ἀληθῶς ἀποστόλοις κατέλιπον, τὴν δὲ τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς

προσηγορίαν τοῖς πάλαι καλουμένοις ἀποστόλοις ἐπέθεσαν, i. e. "Those whom we now call bishops were anciently called apostles; but in process of time the name of apostle was left to them who were more strictly apostles, (viz. the twelve,) and the name of bishop was restrained to those who were anciently called apostles." If therefore the practice of the apostles, proceeding upon the express institution of our Saviour, be sufficient to found a divine right, we have this, you see, to plead for a superiority and subordination of ecclesiastical offices; since the apostles did not only ordain presbyters and deacons in the several churches they planted, but also apostles or bishops to preside over them; and if their ordaining of presbyters be an argument of the perpetuity of the office of a presbyter, (as the presbyterians themselves contend it is,) why should not their ordaining bishops also be as good an argument of the perpetuity of the office of a bishop? If either be perpetual, why not both? if not both, why either? and how can we argue a perpetual power of ordination in the church, from the ordination of Timothy and Titus for instance, (as the presbyterians do, vide *Jus Divin.* p. 159, 167.) if the office they were ordained to were not perpetual, which is in nothing different from that which they exercised in their churches.

III. That the true government of the church is episcopal, is evident also from the universal conformity of the primitive church thereunto. It is objected by the adversaries of the episcopal government, that though our Saviour indeed instituted a superior order of church officers, viz. his twelve apostles, to preside over the rest, and govern his church; yet this was an extraordinary commission which he never in-

tended they should derive down to the church as a perpetual model of government, but was limited to the persons of the apostles, and was to expire with them. Now that it was not limited to the persons of the apostles is evident, since, as it hath been shewn before, the apostles derived it to others; which they could not have done without violating their trust, and exceeding the bounds of their commission, had it been appropriated to their persons. So that it must be allowed either that they proceeded irregularly in transferring their superiority to others, or that their commission did empower them to transfer it; and therefore if it appear, not only that they might transfer it to some, for the government of some churches, by virtue of their commission, (of which the above-cited instances are a full demonstration,) but also that they universally transferred it to others, for the government of all other churches, then it is certain, that either they mistook the intent of our Saviour's commission, or the intent of it was to empower them to transfer it universally as a standing and perpetual form of ecclesiastical government. In short, if they understood the intendment of their own commission, (as to be sure they did, being guided by the Spirit into all truth,) to be sure they would never have communicated their apostolic superiority to any, had it not been our Saviour's intention, when he commissioned them, to authorize them so to do. And for the same reason we may be sure, that so far forth as they did communicate it, it was our Saviour's intention that they should, now, as was shewn before. To some they did communicate it for the government of some churches, as to Timothy and Titus for instance, for the government of the churches of

Ephesus and Crete: from whence it is evident that it was our Saviour's intention that they should communicate it to some. And for the same reason, if it be made appear that they did communicate it universally for the government of all other churches, it will necessarily follow, that it was our Saviour's intention they should communicate it as an universal form of church government. Now whether they did communicate it universally or no, is a question about matter of fact, and as such is decidable only by the testimony of the most competent witnesses; and the most competent witness, in this case, is the Christian church in the ages next succeeding the apostles, which church attests, with one universal consent, the universal derivation of a superior order of ecclesiastic officers from the apostles, to preside over the churches of Christ. And some Christian writers we have who were living in the very days of the apostles, and were their immediate scholars and disciples; others again, who lived in their days, and were their disciples, who lived in the apostles'; and others who immediately succeeded these: from all which we have ample testimonies of the continued succession of this superior order, even from the apostles to whom our Saviour first derived it. Out of all which I shall only produce some few instances out of an infinite number that might be given. Of the first sort are St. Clemens bishop of Rome, and St. Ignatius bishop of Antioch. St. Clemens, who, as Irenæus tells us, saw the apostles, and conversed familiarly with them, makes mention, in his epistle to the Corinthians, of three orders of ecclesiastical officers in his time, whom he calls the high priests, the priests, and the Levites, which words can be no otherwise under-

stood than of the bishops, presbyters, and the deacons. St. Ignatius, who was the disciple of St. Peter, and in his lifetime bishop of Antioch, is so full and express in all those six epistles he wrote on the way to his martyrdom, for the derivation of this superior order from the apostles, that the adversaries of this order have no other way to evade him but by condemning those epistles for counterfeits; from which injurious sentence they have of late been so triumphantly vindicated by a learned pen of our own, that I dare say no man of learning, for the future, will so far expose the reputation of his understanding and modesty, as to call them in question again. Now in all these epistles the holy martyr not only distinguishes the clergy into bishops, presbyters, and deacons, but strictly enjoins the two latter, as well as the laics, to be dutiful and obedient to the former, and particularly in his epistle to the Trallians. "What is the bishop," saith he, "but he that hath "all authority and power? What is the presbytery, "but a sacred constitution of counsellors and asses-"sors to the bishop? What are the deacons, but imi-"tators of Christ, and ministers to the bishop, as he "was to the Father?" And as he every where enjoins obedience to the bishops, as to the supreme order in the church of Christ, so in the beginning of his epistle to the Philadelphians he tells them, that "so "many as belong to Christ are united to the bishop, "and that so many as depart from him and his com-"munion, and associate themselves with the accursed, "shall be cut off with them." And in his epistle to the Magnesians he tells them, that "it highly be-"came them to obey their bishop, and not to con-"tradict him in any thing; for it is a terrible thing

"to contradict him, because in so doing you do not "so much despise him who is visible, as the invisible "God, who will not be despised; for his promotion "is not from men, but from God." And several of his contemporary bishops he mentions by name, viz. Onesimus bishop of the Ephesians, Polycarp of the Smyrneans, Polybius of the Trallians, and Demas of the Magnesians; and still as he mentions them, he highly commends the presbyters and deacons for their obedience to them. So in the beginning of his epistle to the Magnesians: "Having been so happy as "to see you by your worthy bishop Demas, and "your worthy presbyters, viz. Bassus and Apol-"linus, and Zotion your deacon, whom I cannot but "commend for his obedience to the bishop and the "presbytery—you ought not to contemn the youth "of your bishop, but to pay him all veneration, (as I "know your holy presbyters do,) according to the ap-"pointment of God the Father." And in his epistle to the Ephesians, "Let us be careful," saith he, "that "we do not oppose the bishop, as we would be obe-"dient to God; and if any man observe the silence "of his bishop, let him reverence him so much the "more: for every one that the master of the family "appoints to be his steward, we ought to receive "him as the master himself; and therefore it is evi-"dent we ought to respect the bishop as our Lord "himself." From whence I infer, first, that at the writing of these epistles, which was not above eight or nine years after the decease of St. John, there were bishops everywhere constituted over the churches of Christ; for he not only mentions several churches that had bishops actually presiding over them, but declares bishops to be of divine ordination, and that

they were to be obeyed, κατὰ γνώμην Θεοῦ πατρὸς, "according to the appointment of God the Father;" and that οὐ πρὸς ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλὰ πρὸς Θεὸν ἔχει τὴν ἀναφορὰν, "that they had their promotion, not from men, but "from God;" and not only so, but in his epistle to the Trallians, he bids them obey their bishops, as Christ and his apostles had commanded them; in which he necessarily supposes bishops to be instituted by Christ and his apostles: and then he goes on, "He who is within the altar" (that is, within the communion of the church) "is clean," ὁ δὲ ἐκτὸς ὢν, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ τῶν διακόνων τι πράσσων, i. e. "he is without the altar who "does any thing without the bishop, and presbyters, "and deacons;" and if any Christian acting without the bishop, &c. was without the communion of the church, then to be sure no community of Christians that did so could be esteemed a part or member of the church: and therefore since, according to the doctrine of this primitive age, bishops were a divine ordinance, and were looked upon as necessary to the very constitution of churches, we may from hence justly conclude that there were then no churches without them. And secondly, we may from hence also infer, that since there were bishops in this early age presiding over the churches of Christ, several of them at least received their episcopal orders immediately from the hands of the apostles: for at the time when these epistles were written, Ignatius himself had been above forty years bishop of Antioch, at which time sundry of the apostles were living; and therefore, considering the singular eminence of the church of Antioch, whereof he was bishop, as being immediately planted by St. Peter

and St. Paul, and that wherein the disciples of Jesus first received the name of Christian; and considering also that it was the constant practice of the apostles to ordain elders in all the churches they planted, it is highly probable that he received his ordination immediately from their hands; and so St. Chrysostom, tom. v. edit. Savil. p. 499. expressly tells us, that he did not so much admire Ignatius for that he was accounted worthy of so great a dignity, ἀλλ' ὅτι καὶ παρὰ ἁγίων ἐκείνων τὴν ἀρχὴν ταύτην ἐνεχειρίσθη, καὶ αἱ τῶν μακαρίων ἀποστόλων χεῖρες τὴν ἱερᾶς ἐκείνης ἥψαντο κεφαλῆς, i. e. "but because he obtained "his dignity from those holy men, and the sacred "hands of the blessed apostles had been laid upon "his head." And the same may be said of Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, of whom Ignatius makes honourable mention. And indeed it is not to be imagined that the Christian churches would ever have so universally admitted of bishops, as it is apparent they did in Ignatius's time, when the apostles were living, had not some of them at least derived their authority from the apostles immediately: and considering how much St. John, who survived the apostles, was reverenced to the last through all the Christian churches, what likelihood is there that those very churches should so far contemn both him and them, even whilst they were living among them, as to admit of a new order of men without their authority to oversee and govern them? But that *de facto* the apostles did with their own hands ordain several bishops to preside over several churches, is most certain, if any credit may be given to ecclesiastical history, which assures us, that they ordained Dionysius the Areopagite bishop of

Athens, Caius of Thessalonica, Archippus of Colosse, Onesimus of Ephesus, Antipas of Pergamus, Euphroditus of Philippi, Crescens of the Gauls, Erastus of Macedonia, Trophimus of Arles, Jason of Tarsus, Titus of Corinth, Onesiphorus of Colophon, Quartus of Berytus, Paul the proconsul of Narbona. (Vide bishop Taylor, of Episcopacy, sect. 18.) But then, thirdly and lastly, from hence I also infer, that the bishops of this age were looked upon as a superior order to all other ecclesiastical officers; for Ignatius not only enjoins the presbyters and deacons to obey their bishops, but also presses them thereunto by the command of Christ; and if by Christ's command they were to obey their bishops, then by Christ's institution their bishops were their superiors. Thus much therefore we are assured of by the testimony of Ignatius, that in the apostolic age bishops were universally admitted in the churches of Christ, that they derived their authority from the hands of the apostles, and that by virtue of that authority they were superior to all other ecclesiastical officers: and this is all we contend for.

And now let us proceed to the testimony of the writers of the next age, who conversed with those that were conversant with the apostles; of which number are Justin Martyr, Hegesippus, Dionysius bishop of Corinth, Irenæus, and Clemens Alexandrinus: the first of which was converted to Christianity about the year of our Lord 133. which is not above twenty-five years after the death of St. John. This writer, in his Apology for Christianity to the emperor Antoninus, giving an account of the manner of their public worship, makes mention of a προεστὼς, i. e. a president, or presiding ecclesiastic, in the mo-

ther church, who did there consecrate the bread and wine in the sacrament, and give it to the deacons to distribute it to such as were present, and carry it to such as were absent, and who did receive the charities of the people, and dispose of and manage the stock of the church. Now that προεστὼς was the bishop's title is evident; for so Dionysius bishop of Corinth, who was Justin Martyr's contemporary, uses the word προεστὼς and ἐπίσκοπος promiscuously, styling Publius, bishop of Athens, προεστὼς, or president, and Quadratus, his successor, ἐπίσκοπος, or bishop, (vide Euseb. lib. iv. cap. 23.) Next after him we have the testimony of Hegesippus, who, as St. Jerom, *de Script. Eccles.* tells us, lived very near to the apostolic age. He wrote five books of commentaries, some fragments of which are preserved in Eusebius his history, in which he not only makes mention of several bishops with whom he conversed in his journey from Judea to Rome, and of Primus bishop of Corinth by name, and afterwards of Anicetus, Soter, and Eleutherius, bishops of Rome successively; but also tells us, that after James the Just, who was the first bishop of Jerusalem, had suffered martyrdom, Simeon Cleophæ was made bishop of that church, because he was of the kindred of our Lord, (vide Euseb. lib. iv. cap. 22.) Not long after him, Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, makes mention in several epistles of several bishops by name, and particularly of Publius and Quadratus, successive bishops of Athens; of Dionysius the Areopagite, the first bishop of that church; of Philip, bishop of Gortyna in Crete; of Palma, bishop of Amastris in Pontus; of Binytus, bishop of the Gnossians; and of Soter, bishop of Rome, (vide Euseb. lib. iv. cap. 23.)

About the same time lived Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, who, as himself tells us in his epistle to Florinus, had often seen Polycarp the disciple of St. John, "and did very well remember his person and behaviour, when he discoursed to the multitude, the intimate conversation he had with St. John, and the rest of the apostles who had seen our Lord." And from him we have this express testimony concerning the matter in debate; "We can reckon up those who were ordained bishops by the apostles in the churches, who they were that succeeded them even down to our times—for the apostles would have them to be in all things perfect and unreprovable, whom they left to be their successors, and to whom they delivered their apostolic authority." And then he goes on, and gives us a catalogue of eleven bishops of Rome, by name, beginning from Linus, to whom he tells us St. Peter and St. Paul *episcopatum administrandæ ecclesiæ tradiderunt*, i. e. "delivered the episcopal power of governing that church," and ending with Eleutherius, who was the twelfth, and did then actually preside in the episcopal chair. And that by bishops in this age was meant such as presided over presbyters as well as laics, is evident by the demonstration Clemens Alexandrinus makes, who was Irenæus his contemporary, between the *προκοπαὶ ἐπισκόπων, πρεσβυτέρων καὶ διακόνων*, Strom. 6. i. e. "the processes of bishops, presbyters, and deacons:" and a little before, speaking of the dignity of the presbytery, he tells us, *κἂν ἐνταῦθ' ἐπὶ γῆς πρωτοκαθεδρίᾳ μὴ τιμηθῇ*,—i. e. that it was not honoured with the first seat, or placed in the first class of the ecclesiastic orders; which plainly shews, that then there was an order above the presbytery, viz. the bishops,

whom presently after he mentions as the first order of ecclesiastics. And that passage which Eusebius quotes from him out of his book, Τίς ὁ σωζόμενος πλούσιος, lately published, is a plain argument, that in his time bishops were looked on as a distinct order from the rest of the clergy; for he tells us, that when St. John returned from Patmos to Ephesus, he visited the neighbouring provinces, ὅπου μὲν ἐπισκόπους καταστήσων, ὅπου δὲ κλήρῳ ἔναγέ τινα κληρώσων τῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος σημαινομένων: i. e. "partly that he might ordain bishops, and partly that he might set apart "such for the clergy as were pointed out to him by "the Holy Spirit;" by which it is evident, that in Clement's time at least, and, if he be not mistaken, in St. John's too, the bishops were a distinct order from the rest of the clergy, viz. the presbyters and deacons. Thus both in the apostolic age, and that succeeding it, we have abundant testimony of the derivation of the superiority of the apostolic order from the apostles to the bishops of the churches of Christ.

And then for the next age we have the concurrent testimonies of Tertullian, Origen, and St. Cyprian, not only of the continuance of this apostolic superiority in the church, but also of the derivation of it from the apostles themselves. But we need not cite their words, it being granted by the most learned advocates of the presbyterian government, that for several years before these fathers, viz. about the year of our Lord 140. the episcopacy was every where received in the church: for they tell us, that though the apostles exercised a superiority over the other ecclesiastical orders, yet they left none behind to succeed them in that power; but the church was

every where governed by a common council of presbyters: but this form of government being found inconvenient, as giving too much occasion for schisms and divisions, it was at last universally agreed upon, that one presbyter should be chosen out to preside over all the rest; and this, say they, was the beginning of the episcopacy; for which they cite that famous passage of St. Jerom, *Antequam Diaboli instinctu*, &c. i. e. "Before such time as through the "instinct of the Devil divisions in religion began, "and it was said among the people, I am of Paul, I "am of Apollos, and I of Cephas, the churches were "governed by common councils of presbyters; but "afterwards every presbyter reckoning such as he "baptized to be his and not Christ's, it was de-"creed over all the world, that one from among the "presbyters should be chosen and set over all the "rest, to whom should belong all the care of the "churches, that so the seeds of schisms might be de-"stroyed:" which universal decree, as they guess, was made about the year 140. Now not to dispute with them the sense of this passage, but allowing it to bear their sense, I shall only desire the reader to consider,

First, That it is the testimony of one who lived long after the afore-cited witnesses, and so far less capable of attesting so early a matter of fact. For some of the witnesses above cited were such as lived in the days of the apostles; others, such as lived in their days who lived in the days of the apostles, and certainly these were much more competent witnesses of what was done in the apostles' days than St. Jerom, who was not born till about the year 330. almost one hundred years after Origen the latest, and three hundred years after Clemens the earliest, of the above-cited

witnesses: and certainly to prefer the authority of one single witness, who lived so long after the matter of fact, to the unanimous attestations of so many earlier witnesses, is both immodest and irrational.

2. It is also to be considered, that St. Jerom was a witness in his own cause, in which case men of his warmth and passion are too too apt to exceed the limits of truth; for the design of that passage was to curb the insolence of some pragmatical deacons, who would needs advance themselves above the presbyters, which St. Jerom, being a presbyter himself, takes in high disdain, and, as the best of men are too prone to do when their own concerns are at stake, bends the stick too much the other way, and depresses the deacons too low, and advances the presbyters too high. For,

3. In other places, where he is not biassed by partiality to his own order, he talks at a quite different rate; so in Dial. advers. Luciferian: "Dost thou "ask why one that is not baptized by the bishop doth "not receive the Holy Ghost? why it proceeds from "hence, that the Holy Ghost descended on the "apostles." Where it is plain he places the bishops in the same rank with the apostles. So also in Ep. 1. ad Heliodor. speaking of the bishops of his time, "They stand," saith he, "in the place of St. Paul, "and hold the place of St. Peter." And in Psal. xlv. 16. "Now because the apostles are gone from the "world, thou hast, instead of those their sons, the bi-"shops, and these are thy fathers, because thou art "governed by them." And Ep. ad Nepot. "What "Aaron and his sons were, that we know the bishops "and the presbyters are." And therefore, as Aaron by divine right was superior to his sons the priests,

so is the bishop above his presbyters. All which are as plain contradictions to that famous passage of his, (understanding it as the presbyterians do) as one proposition can be to another: and whether is a man more to be credited when he speaks without bias or partiality, or when he speaks in his own cause, and under the influence of his own interest?

4. It is further to be considered, that the decree of which St. Jerom here speaks, by which the government of the church was translated from a common council of presbyters to a single bishop, must, according to his own words, be apostolic, and consequently much earlier than the presbyterians will allow it; for it was made at that time when it was said among the people, *I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos, and I of Cephas;* and this, as St. Paul tells us, was said in his time, and therefore this decree must be made in his time: and that St. Jerom did mean so, we are elsewhere assured from his own words; for so in his book de Eccles. Script. he tells us, "that immediately after the ascension of our "Lord, St. James was ordained by the apostles to be "bishop of Jerusalem, Timothy by St. Paul bishop "of Ephesus, Titus bishop of Crete, and Polycarp "by St. John bishop of Smyrna." So that either he must here expressly contradict himself, or else the decree of which he speaks must have been made immediately after the ascension of our Lord, and consequently be a decree apostolic.

5. It is yet farther to be considered, that if any such decree, of changing the church government from presbyterial to episcopal, had been made by the apostles, it is strange we should not find the least mention of it in scripture; and if it had been

made after the apostles, about the year 140. it is as strange we should have no mention of it in ecclesiastic antiquity: for an universal change of the government of the church, from one kind to another, is a matter of such vast moment, that had the apostles made a decree concerning it, they would doubtless have been very solicitous to publish it through all the churches, and to have transmitted down to posterity some standing record of it; which yet they were so far from doing, that they have not given us the least intimation of it in all their writings: and had it been made afterwards, about the year 140. to be sure all primitive antiquity would have rung of such a public and important alteration: but on the contrary you see both Clemens and Ignatius, who lived before that period, testify that the church was not governed in their time by a common council of presbyters, but by bishops. Hegesippus, Irenæus, and Dionysius of Corinth, who lived in that period, are so far from taking notice of any such decree of alteration, that they testify the government of the church by an uninterrupted succession of bishops, even from the apostles themselves. And as for Irenæus, who gives us an account of the succession of the Roman bishops from St. Peter down to the time when he himself was at Rome, it was as easy for him to know who they were that succeeded from St. Peter, as it is for us to know who succeeded from archbishop Whitgift in the chair of Canterbury, he being no farther distant from the one than we are from the other. And though through the ambiguity or defect of the records of some churches, this succession be not equally clear in all, yet in the most eminent churches, such as Jerusalem, Rome,

Antioch, and Alexandria, the successions are as clear as any thing in ecclesiastical history. And is it not much more reasonable to conclude what was the government of those churches that are not known, from what we find was the government of those that are, than to question those ecclesiastical records that are preserved, because of the uncertainty of those that are not? For though we do not find in all churches an exact catalogue of all their bishops; yet we cannot produce any one instance, in any one ancient church, of any other form of government than the episcopal: and therefore we may as well question whether ever there was any such thing as an ancient monarchy in the world, because many of the histories of the monarchs are defective as to their names, and the order of their succession; as whether there was ever any such thing as a primitive episcopacy in the church, because the records of several churches are defective as to the names and successions of their bishops. Since therefore this story of St. Jerom's universal decree is not only altogether unattested, but also directly contradictory to the concurrent testimony of all antiquity, how can we reasonably look upon it otherwise than as a mere figment of his own fancy? especially considering,

6. And lastly, How odiously this conceit of his reflects upon the wisdom of our Saviour and his apostles: for the apostles, devolving the government of the church upon common councils of presbyters, was, as he himself tells us, the occasion of sundry schisms and divisions, for the removal of which, the church afterwards found it necessary to dissolve those presbyteries and introduce episcopacy in their room; and this Jerom approves as a very wise and

prudent action; "For," saith he, "the safety of the "church depends upon the authority of the high "priest, or bishop, to whom, if there were not given "all supreme authority, there would be as many "schisms in the churches as there are priests." So that, according to him, had the church continued under that government which the apostles left in it, it must unavoidably have been torn in pieces with endless schisms and divisions; and if so, either the apostles were very imprudent in not foreseeing this, or very neglective in not preventing it; so that had not the after-age taken care to supply the defect of their conduct, by erecting a wiser form of government than they left, the church had infallibly run to ruin. This is the unavoidable consequence of St. Jerom's hypothesis; which therefore I can look upon no otherwise than as a mere device of his own brain, snatched up in haste to defend his order against the insolence of those factious deacons that flew in the face of the presbytery.

This therefore being removed, which is the main, and indeed the only considerable objection against the universal conformity of the primitive church to the episcopal government, it remains, that if any credit may be given either to those writers that lived in the apostolic age, or to those who immediately succeeded them, it is evident, from their unanimous testimonies, that the episcopacy is nothing else but only the apostolic superiority derived from the hands of the apostles in a continued succession from one generation to another; and to reject their testimony is not only very unreasonable, (there being at least as much reason why we should reject all ancient history,) but also of very dangerous conse-

quence, since it is from thence that we derive the very canon of scripture, and so we may as well reject it in this instance as in the other.

IV. And lastly, That the rightful government of the church of Christ is episcopal, is evident also from our Saviour's declared allowance and approbation of the primitive practice in this matter, viz. in those seven epistles which he sent by St. John to the seven churches of Asia, all which he directs particularly to the seven angels of those churches, whom he not only styles *the seven stars in his own right hand*, or the seven lights of those seven churches, (vide Rev. i. 20. and Rev. ii. 1.) but in every epistle particularly owns them for his *angels*, or *messengers*. If therefore we can prove that these seven angels were at that time the seven bishops that presided over both the clergy and laity of those seven churches, they will be an unanswerable instance of our Saviour's allowance and approbation of the episcopal order. In order therefore to the clearing this matter, I shall shew,

First, That they were single persons.

Secondly, That they were persons of great authority in those churches.

Thirdly, That they were the presidents or bishops of those churches.

First, That they were single persons is evident, because they are all along mentioned as such. *The angel of the church of Ephesus* is the singular number; *the angel of the church of Smyrna*; and so of all the rest: and so every where in the body of the Epistles they are all along addressed to in the singular number; *I know thy works and thy labour; nevertheless I have a few things against thee: re-*

member whence thou art fallen, repent, and do thy first works: and the like. In all which our Saviour plainly writes to them as to single persons. It is true, what he writes to them, he writes not only to them personally, but also to the people under their government and inspection; and therefore sometimes he mentions the people plurally; so chap. ii. ver. 10. *The Devil shall cast some of you into prison;* and so ver. 13. and ver. 23. But this is so far from arguing that these angels were not single persons, that it argues the quite contrary; since if they had not, what reason can there be assigned, why our Saviour should not mention them plurally as well as the people? I know it is objected, that the angel of the church of Thyatira is mentioned plurally, chap. ii. ver. 24. *But unto you I say, and unto the rest of Thyatira;* where by *you* it is supposed must be meant the *angel*, and by *the rest of Thyatira*, the *people*. To which I answer, that in the ancient Greek manuscripts, and particularly in that of St. James's, *καὶ*, or *and*, is left out; and so the words run thus, *But unto you the rest of Thyatira*, or, *to the rest of you at Thyatira*, which is set in opposition to those of Thyatira that had been seduced into the sect of Jezebel; and therefore cannot be understood of the angel, who is all along mentioned in the singular number; wherefore had he not been a single person, no account can be given why he should be mentioned singly, and *the rest of Thyatira* plurally. But then,

Secondly, That these single persons were of great authority in those churches is evident, not only by that honourable title of *angel* that is given them, which plainly shews them to be persons of office and

eminence, and that not only by our Saviour's directing his epistles to them, to be communicated by them to their several churches, but also from that authority which the angel of Ephesus exercised there, and which the angels of Pergamus and Thyatira ought to have exercised, but did not. For as for the angel of Ephesus, he is commended for *trying them which said they were apostles, and were not*, and discovering them to be liars, which words plainly denote a juridical trial and conviction of some person or persons, who pretended to apostolical authority, but upon examination were found to be cheats and impostors. And then as for the angel of the church of Pergamus, he is blamed for having in his church those that held the doctrine of Balaam or of the Nicolaitans; which plainly shews that he had power to remedy it by casting them out of the church: for if he had not, how could he have been justly blamed for suffering them? And the same may be said of the angel of the church of Thyatira, who is also blamed for suffering the woman Jezebel, which was not in his power to prevent, unless we suppose him to have authority to eject her and her followers. But then,

Thirdly and lastly, That these single persons were the presidents or bishops of those churches is also evident from the most primitive antiquity; for so in the anonymous tract of Timothy's martyrdom recorded in Biblioth. Pat. n. 244. we are told, that when St. John the apostle returned from his exile in Patmos, which was two or three years after he wrote his Revelations, *αὐτὸς δι' ἑαυτοῦ, ἑκτὰ συμπαρόντων ἐπισκόπων τῶν Ἐφεσίων, ἀντιλαμβάνεται μητροπόλεως*, i.e. "that "being assisted with the presence of the seven bi-

"shops of that province he assumed to himself the "government of it." Now that these seven bishops were the same with those seven angels he wrote to in his Revelations is evident, because all those seven churches in which those seven angels presided lay within the circuit of the Lydian or proconsular Asia, of which Ephesus was the metropolis; and therefore who else can we so fairly suppose these seven bishops to be, by whom he governed the province of Ephesus, as the seven angels of those seven churches, which were all of them within that province? and St. Austin expressly calls the angel of the church of Ephesus the *præpositus ecclesiæ*, i. e. "the go-"vernor of the church," Ep. 162. and speaking of those seven angels, he styles them *episcopi sive præpositi ecclesiarum*, "the bishops or governors of "the churches," Comment. in Revel. So also the commentaries under the name of St. Ambrose, referring to these angels in 1 Cor. xi. expressly tells us, that by those angels he means the bishops. And that they were so is most indubitably evident of the angel of the church of Smyrna in particular, who could be no other than St. Polycarp, who was most certainly made bishop of Smyrna some years before the writing these epistles, and continued bishop of it a great many years after: for so Ignatius, who was his contemporary, in his epistle to that church styles him, "Polycarp your bishop;" and earnestly exhorts his presbyters and deacons, as well as the laity, to be subject to him: and Irenæus, who personally knew him, hath this passage concerning him: Πολύκαρπος δὲ οὐ μόνον ὑπὸ ἀποστόλων μαθητευθεὶς, &c. "Polycarpus was not only instructed by the "apostles, and did not only converse with many of

" those who had seen our Lord, but by the apostles " who were in Asia was made bishop of Smyrna," Euseb. Hist. l. iv. c. 15. And in their encyclical epistle of his martyrdom, the whole church of Smyrna style him " bishop of the catholic church of Smyrna," *ibid.* So also Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus, who was thirty-eight years old when Polycarp suffered, tells us, that " he was bishop and martyr in Smyrna," Euseb. Hist. l. v. c. 24. and the same is attested by Tertullian, Eusebius, and St. Jerom, and indeed by all ecclesiastic antiquity: so that it is a plain case, that one of these angels, to whom St. John writes, was bishop of the church whereof he styles him the *angel;* and since one was so, to be sure all were so; especially considering that very near, if not at the very time when these epistles were written, we have certain account that there were bishops actually presiding in these seven churches. So within twelve years after these epistles were written, Ignatius, in his epistle to the Ephesians, makes mention of Onesimus their bishop, whom he exhorts them all, as well presbyters and deacons, as laity, to obey. That there was also at the same time a bishop in Philadelphia is abundantly evident from Ignatius his epistle to that church, though he doth not name him; and about the same time Carpus was bishop of Thyatira, as the ancient Roman martyrology testifies, and Segasis of Laodicea, (vide Euseb. Hist. l. iv. c. 25.) and Melito bishop of Sardis, *ibid.* And as for the church of Pergamus, Paræus, in his commentary on chap. ii. of the Revelations, proves out of Aretas Cæsariensis, that Antipas, that faithful martyr, mentioned Rev. ii. 13. was bishop of it immediately before the angel of that church to whom

St. John wrote; and that that angel was one Gaius, who, as he proves out of Clemens, immediately succeeded Antipas in the episcopal chair. Since therefore it is apparent that at the writing these epistles to these seven churches there was a bishop actually presiding in one of them, and that about the same time there were bishops presiding also in all the rest, there can be no colour of reason to doubt, but that all those churches had bishops in them when St. John wrote to them; and if so, to be sure those bishops being the governors of those churches, and having the charge of them committed to them, were those very angels whom St. John wrote to, because he all along writes to them as to those who were the overseers and governors of their respective churches; and if those angels were bishops, then in them our Saviour expressly allows and approves of the episcopal order, since he not only dignifies them with the name of *angels*, but calls them *stars in his own right hand.*

The sum of all therefore is this: If our Saviour's own institution, seconded by the practice of his apostles upon it, and succeeded by the conformity of all the primitive churches to it, and this conformity of theirs authorized by the express approbation of our Saviour, be a sufficient argument of the divine right of any form of church-government, then must the episcopal form, which hath all these things, you see, to plead for itself, be of divine right and ordination. Having thus shewn at large what that ecclesiastical or spiritual government is, which Christ hath established in his church, I proceed,

Thirdly and lastly, to shew what are the proper ministries of this government in the kingdom of

Christ. And these are of two sorts; first, such as are common to the bishops or governors of the church with the inferior officers; and secondly, such as are peculiar to the bishops or governors. First, Such as are common to the bishops, together with the inferior officers of the church: and these are, 1. To teach the gospel: 2. To administer the evangelical sacraments: 3. To offer up the public prayers and intercessions of Christian assemblies.

1. To teach the gospel, which is the first ministerial act mentioned by our Saviour in the commission which he gave his apostles, *Go teach all nations*, Matth. xxviii. 19. and accordingly the apostles declare, Acts vi. 2, 4. that preaching the word was one of the principal employments appertaining to their office; but yet it is evident that it never was restrained to their office; for not only the apostles, but the seventy disciples also were commissioned to preach the gospel by our Saviour, Luke x. 9, 10, 11. and even in the apostles' days, not only they, but Philip also, and Stephen, and Lucius of Cyrene, who were no apostles, did yet preach the gospel to the world; and besides the apostles there were prophets, teachers, and evangelists, that preached the gospel as well as they. But yet as for the office of preaching, it is plain that none were ever admitted to it, but either by immediate commission from our Saviour, or by apostolic ordination, or by an immediate miraculous unction of the Holy Ghost, by which they were inspired with the gifts of preaching, and enabled freely and readily, and without any study of their own, to explain, and prove, and apply the doctrines of the gospel to their hearers; and that either in their own or other languages, as occasion re-

quired; which gift was the same with that which is called in scripture *the gift of utterance;* and it being bestowed upon them for the public benefit and edification of the church, the very bestowing it (without any other ordination) was an immediate mission from the Holy Ghost; only they who pretended to it were to be tried by such as had the gift of *discerning of spirits,* (vide 1 Cor. xii. 10. compared with 1 Cor. xiv. 29.) and if upon that trial their pretence was found real, they were owned and received without any more ado, as authorized preachers sent by the Holy Ghost; and it was upon this extraordinary mission, as it seems very probable, that those extraordinary offices of prophets and evangelists were founded, both which included authority to preach the gospel; and therefore, upon the cessation of this extraordinary mission, those offices ceased immediately with it, as depending wholly upon it; and from thenceforth none were ever admitted to the office of preaching, but by ordinary mission and ordination from the apostolate derived to the bishops and governors of the church. For though there are some very early instances of learned laymen, that were admitted to preach upon some emergent occasions, and upon special licence from the bishop, yet can there no one instance be produced of any that were admitted to the office of preaching, without episcopal ordination.

2. Another of the ministries common to the bishops with the inferior clergy is the administration of the evangelical sacraments; for it was to his apostles, and in them to their successors, that our Saviour gave the commission of *baptizing all nations, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:*

and of *doing this* (i. e. of consecrating and administering the holy eucharist) *in remembrance of me:* but yet it is evident, that this ministry was not so confined to the apostolic order, as that none but they were allowed to exercise it; for even in the apostles' days Philip and Ananias, who were no apostles, baptized, and St. Peter commanded the brethren with him (who were no apostles neither) to baptize those gentile converts upon which the Holy Ghost descended, Acts x. 48. and there is no doubt, but when those three thousand souls, Acts ii. were all baptized at one time, there were a great many other baptizers besides the apostles: and that passage of St. Paul, 1 Cor. i. 13—17. where he tells us, that he baptized none in the church of Corinth, though it were of his own planting, except Crispus, Gaius, and the household of Stephanus, is a plain argument, that when the apostles had converted men to the Christian faith, they generally ordered them to be baptized by the inferior ministers of the church that attended them. And then as for the consecration of the holy eucharist, though when any of the apostles were present it was doubtless ordinarily performed by them; yet considering how fast Christianity increased, and how frequently Christians did then partake of this sacrament, it is not to be supposed that the apostles could be present in all places where it was administered, nor consequently that they could consecrate it in every particular congregation. For though it was a very early custom for the bishop to consecrate the elements in one congregation, and then send them abroad to be administered in several others; yet this was only upon special occasions: but ordinarily they were conse-

crated in the same places where they were administered; in all which places, it was impossible either for the apostles at first, or after them for their successors the bishops, to be present at the same time: and therefore there can be no doubt but the consecration, as well as the administration, was ordinarily performed by the inferior presbyters, in the absence of the apostles and bishops. But it is most certain that none were ever allowed in the primitive church to consecrate the eucharist, but either a bishop or a presbyter. And as for baptism, because it is in some degree more necessary than the eucharist, as being the sign of admission into the new covenant, by which we are first entitled to it, not only bishops and presbyters, but in their absence, or by their allowance, deacons also were authorized to administer it: for so even in the apostles' days Philip the deacon baptized at Samaria, Acts viii. 12. and afterwards not only deacons but laymen too were allowed to administer it in case of necessity, when neither a deacon, nor presbyter, nor bishop could be procured; that so none might be debarred of admission into the new covenant that were disposed and qualified to receive it. But the church's allowing this to laymen only in cases of necessity, is a plain argument that none had a standing authority to administer it, but only persons in holy orders. For that authority which a present necessity creates is only present, and ceases with the necessity that created it.

3. And lastly, another of the ministries common to the bishops with the inferior clergy, is to offer up the public prayers and intercessions of Christian assemblies: for to be sure none can be authorized to

perform the public offices of the church, but only such as are set apart and ordained to be the public officers of it. Now prayer is one of the most solemn offices of Christian assemblies; and therefore as in the Jewish church none but the high priests, and priests and Levites, who were the only public ministers of religion, were authorized to offer up the public prayers of the congregation, (vide 2 Chron. xxix. 26.) so in the Christian none but bishops, priests, and deacons, who alone are the public ministers of Christianity, are authorized to offer up the public addresses of Christian assemblies; it is their peculiar λειτουργεῖν τῷ Κυρίῳ, i. e. "to perform the "public office to the Lord," Acts xiii. 2. for so the word λειτουργεία signifies *public service*, and is used to denote those public services (of which one was, offering up the common prayers of the people) which the priests in their turns performed in the temple, (vide Luke i. 23.) and hence it is, that the ministers of the Christian religion are called λειτουργοὶ, Rom. xv. 16. because it is their proper business to officiate the public services of the Christian church. And accordingly, in Rev. v. 8. *the four and twenty elders*, (that is, the holy bishops of the church, as appears by their having crowns of gold or mitres on their heads, in allusion to the high priest's mitre, chap. iv. ver. 4.) are said *to have every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints*, referring to the incense which the priests were wont to offer in the sanctuary, which oblation was a mystical offering up the prayers of the people, (vide Luke i. 10.) which plainly intimates, that as it was one part of the office of those Jewish priests to offer the incense, and there-

withal the prayers of the people, so it is also of the public ministers of Christianity to offer up the prayers of Christian assemblies. And as in the Jewish church not only the priests, but the Levites also, communicated with the high priests in this ministry of offering up the prayers of the congregation, so, in the Christian church, not only the presbyters, but the deacons also, always communicated in it with their bishop. Having thus given an account of those religious ministries which are common to the bishops with the inferior officers of the church, I proceed, in the next place, to shew what those ministries are which are peculiar to the bishops or governors of the church; all which are reducible to four particulars: 1. To make laws for the peace and good order of the church. 2. To ordain to ecclesiastical offices. 3. To execute that spiritual jurisdiction which Christ hath established in his church. 4. To confirm such as have been instructed in Christianity.

I. One peculiar ministry of the bishops and governors of the church is to make laws and canons for the security and preservation of the church's peace and good order; and this is implied in the very essence of government, which necessarily supposes a legislative power within itself, to command and oblige the subject to do or forbear such things as it shall judge conducive to the preservation or disturbance of their common weal, without which power no government can be enabled to obtain its end, which is the good of the public. Since therefore the church, by Christ's own institution, is a governed society of men, we must either suppose its government to be very lame and defective, which would be to blaspheme the wisdom of our Saviour,

or allow it to have a legislative power inherent in it. But that *de facto* it hath such a power in it is evident from the practice of the apostles, who, as all agree, had the reins of church-government delivered into their hands by our Saviour; for so, in Acts xv. 6. we are told, that, upon occasion of that famous controversy about circumcision, *the apostles and elders came together to consider of this matter;* where by the *elders*, by the consent of all antiquity, is meant the bishops of Judæa, (vide Dr. Hammond on Acts xi. note B.) and after mature debate and deliberation this is the result of the council; *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things*, ver. 28. So that those *necessary things*, specified in the next verse, were, it seems, laid upon them as a *burden*, i. e. legally imposed on them as matter of duty; for herein it is plain the apostles exercised a legislative power over those Christian communities they wrote to, viz. in requiring them to abstain from some things which were never prohibited before by any standing law of Christianity. And as the apostles and primitive bishops made laws by common consent for the church in general, so did they also by their own single authority for particular churches, to which they were more peculiarly related. Thus St. Paul, after he had prescribed some rules to the Corinthians for their more decent communication of the Lord's supper, tells them, that *other things he would set in order when he came among them*, 1 Cor. xi. 34. But how could he otherwise do this, than by giving them certain laws and canons, for the better regulation of their religious offices? So also, 1 Cor. xvi. 1. the same apostle makes mention of an

order, or canon, which he gave to the churches of Galatia, which he enjoins the church of Corinth also to observe; and in 1 Tim. v. he gives Timothy several ecclesiastical rules, to *give in charge* to his church, ver. 7. so also, Tit. i. 5. he tells Titus, that *for this cause he left him in Crete*, with apostolic, or episcopal power, *that he might set in order the things that were wanting;* i. e. that by wholesome laws and constitutions he might redress those disorders and supply those defects, which the shortness of St. Paul's stay there would not permit him to provide for. By all which instances it is abundantly evident, that the governors of the church have a legislative power inherent in them, both to make laws by common consent for the regulation of the church in general, and to prescribe the rules of decency and order in their own particular churches. For what the apostles and primitive bishops did, to be sure they had authority to do; and whatsoever authority they had, they derived it down to their successors. And accordingly we find this ecclesiastic legislation was always administered by the apostles' successors the bishops, who not only gave laws both to the clergy and laity in their own particular churches, but also made laws for the whole church by common consent in their holy councils, wherein during the first four general councils no ecclesiastic beneath a bishop was ever allowed a suffrage, unless it were by deputation from his bishop: and though in making laws for their own churches they generally conducted themselves by the advice and counsel of their presbyters, and sometimes also admitted them into their debates both in their provincial and general councils; yet this was only in preparing the matter of their laws. But that

which gave them the form of laws was purely the episcopal authority and suffrage; and whatsoever was decreed either by the bishop in council with his presbyters, or by the bishops in council among themselves, was always received by the churches of Christ as authentic law. It is true, this legislative power of the church (as was shewn before) extends not so far as to control the decrees of the civil sovereign, who is next to and immediately under God in all causes, and over all persons supreme, and is no otherwise accountable by the laws of Christianity than he was by the laws of natural religion; and therefore as the civil sovereign cannot countermand God's laws, so neither can the church the civil sovereign's: but yet, as next to the laws of God the laws of the civil sovereign are to be obeyed; so next the laws of the civil sovereign the laws of the church are to be obeyed.

II. Another peculiar ministry of the bishops and governors of the church is to consecrate and ordain to ecclesiastical offices. For that those holy ministries which Christ himself performed while he was on earth, such as preaching the gospel, administering the evangelical sacrament, &c. might be continued in his church throughout all generations, he not only himself ordained his twelve apostles, a little before he left the world, to perform those ministries in his absence, but in their ordination transferred on them his own mission from the Father, deriving upon them the same authority to ordain others that he had to ordain them; that so they might derive their mission to others, as he did his to them, through all succeeding generations. For this is necessarily implied in the commission he gave them, John xx. 21. *As my Fa-*

ther hath sent me, so send I you; that is, I do not only send you with full authority to act for me in all things, as my Father sent me to act for him; but I also send you with the same authority to send others that I now exercise in sending you: for unless this be implied in their mission, he did not send them as his Father sent him: unless he gave them the same authority to propagate their mission to others, that his Father gave him to propagate his mission to them, how could he say, that *he sent them as his Father sent him?* since he must have sent them without that very authority from his Father, which he then exercised in sending them. Now the persons whom he sent were the eleven apostles, as you will see by comparing this of St. John with Luke xxiv. 33, 36. Mark xvi. 14. Matthew xxviii. 16. in all which places we are expressly told, that it was the eleven he appeared to when he gave this commission, and consequently it must be the eleven to whom he gave it. This commission therefore of sending others being originally transferred by our Saviour upon the apostolic order, no others could have right to transfer it to others, but only such as were admitted of that order; none could give it to others but only those to whom Christ gave it; and therefore since Christ himself gave it to none but apostles, none but apostles could derive it; and accordingly we find in scripture, that all ecclesiastic commissions were either given by the hands of some of those first apostles who received their commission immediately from our Saviour, or else by some of those secondary apostles that were admitted into apostolic orders by them; which secondary apostles, as was shewn before, were the same with those whom

we now call bishops; for so in Acts vi. 3, 6. the seven first deacons we read of were ordained by the apostles, the whole number of the disciples being present, but the apostles only *appointing and laying their hands on them;* and in Acts xiv. 23. we are told, that Paul and Barnabas, two of the apostles, *ordained elders in every church*, that is, of Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch; and though these two were ordained apostles of the Gentiles by *certain prophets and teachers* in the church of Antioch, Acts xiii. 1, 3. yet there is no doubt but those *prophets and teachers* were such as had received the apostolic character, (being ordained by the apostles bishops of the churches of Syria;) for otherwise how could they have derived it? For so Judas and Silas are called *prophets*, Acts xv. 32. and yet, ver. 22. they are said to be ἡγούμενοι ἐν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς, that is, *rulers among the brethren*, or bishops of Judæa; and afterwards we find that ordination was confined to such as had been admitted to the apostolate: for so the power of *laying on of hands* in the church of Ephesus was committed by St. Paul to Timothy, whom he himself by *the laying on of hands* had ordained the apostle or bishop of that church, 1 Tim. v. 22. 2 Tim. i. 6. so also the power of ordaining in the church of Crete was by St. Paul committed to Titus, whom he had also ordained the apostle or bishop of that church, Tit. i. 5. *For this cause left I thee in Crete, to ordain elders in every city.* Thus all through the whole scripture-history we find the power of ordination administered by such, and none but such, as were of the apostolic order, viz. either by the prime apostles, or by the secondary apostles or bishops. And if we consult the primitive antiquities, which,

to be sure, in matters of fact at least, are the best interpreters of scripture, we shall always find the power of giving orders confined and limited to bishops, which is so undeniable, that St. Jerom himself, who endeavours his utmost to equalize presbyters with bishops, is yet fain to do it with an *excepta ordinatione*, Ep. ad Evagr. *Quid facit excepta ordinatione episcopus, quod presbyter non faciat?* "What can "the bishop do, except ordaining, that the presbyter "may not do also?"

III. Another peculiar ministry of the bishops and governors of the church is to execute that spiritual jurisdiction which Christ hath established in it, i. e. to cite such as are accused of scandalous offences before their tribunals, to inspect and examine the accusation, and, upon sufficient evidence of the truth of it, to admonish the offender of his fault; and, in case he obstinately persist in it, to exclude him from the communion of the church, and from all the benefits of Christianity, till such time as he gives sufficient evidence of his repentance and amendment, and then to receive him in again. For that Christ hath established such a jurisdiction in his church is evident from that passage, Matt. xviii. 15—18. *Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established;* i. e. that thou mayest be able, in case he doth not then amend, to produce sufficient testimony of his guilt before the church's tribunal, to which thou art next to apply thyself. *And if he shall neglect to*

hear them, i. e. to promise amendment upon their admonition, take them along with thee, and *tell it to the church*, that so she may examine the matter, and, upon thy proving his guilt by sufficient witness, may authoritatively admonish him to amend: *but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican;* i. e. give him over for a desperate sinner, as one that is to be ejected from the communion of the church, and no longer to enjoy the common benefits of a Christian. *For verily I say unto you*, that is, to you of the church, before whom this obstinate offender is cited and accused, (for now he speaks no longer in the singular number,) *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven:* i. e. Whomsoever ye shall for just cause eject from the communion of the church into the state of *a heathen man and a publican*, I will certainly exclude out of heaven, unless he reconcile himself to you by confession and promise of amendment; and if thereupon you pardon him, and receive him into the church's communion, I will most certainly pardon him too, if he perform his promise: for that by *binding and loosing upon earth* our Saviour means excluding out of the church, and receiving in again, is evident from that parallel passage, Matt. xvi. 19. *I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven:* where by *the keys of the kingdom of heaven* is plainly meant the authority of a steward to govern his church or family; for so, Isai. xxii. 21, 22. God promises Eliachim that he would

clothe him with the robe of Shebna, who was over the household, ver. 15. i. e. steward of the king's family, and that he would *commit Shebna's government into his hand*, &c. and then it follows, *And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open;* that is in short, I will make him the governor of the family, and give him power to admit or exclude what servants he pleases: and accordingly by *the keys of the kingdom of heaven* must be meant the government of the church; for so *keys* denote authority to govern, (vide Rev. iii. 7.) and by *binding and loosing*, the power of shutting out of, or readmitting into it; and therefore in John xx. 23. this *binding and loosing* is thus expressed, *Whose sins ye remit*, or loose, *shall be remitted*, or loosed; *whose sins ye retain*, or keep bound, *shall be retained*, or kept bound: for though the words are different from those in St. Matthew, yet they are of the same import and signification; and consequently our Saviour's meaning must be the same here as there, viz. Whose sins you loose from the penalty of exclusion from the church, I also will loose from the penalty of exclusion out of heaven; and whose sins you keep bound, or obliged to that penalty, I also will keep bound, and obliged to this.

This is the spiritual jurisdiction which Christ hath established in his church, to bind or loose, suspend or restore, excommunicate or absolve; and this he hath wholly deposited in the episcopal order: for in all the above-cited places it was only to his apostles that he derived this jurisdiction; they alone were the stewards to whom he committed the keys

and government of his family; and it was to them alone that he promised that they should *sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel;* that is, to rule and govern the spiritual Israel, which is the Christian church, even as the *phylarcæ,* or chiefs of the tribes, governed the twelve tribes of natural Israel, Matt. xix. 28. And hence in that mystical representation of the church by a city descending from heaven, Rev. xxi. the wall of it is said to have *twelve foundations, and upon them twelve names of the twelve apostles,* ver. 14. and those twelve foundations are compared to *twelve precious stones,* to denote their power and dignity in the church, ver. 19, 20. and the wall being exactly meted is found to be one hundred and forty-four cubits, that is, twelve times twelve, to denote that these twelve apostles had each of them an equal portion allotted him in the government and administration of the church, ver. 17. This spiritual jurisdiction therefore, of governing the church, and administering the censures of it, being by our Saviour wholly lodged in the apostolate, none can justly claim or pretend to it but such as are of the apostolic order; and accordingly in the apostolic age we find it was always administered either immediately by the apostles themselves, or by the bishops of the several churches to whom they communicated their order: for thus in the church of Corinth it was St. Paul who pronounced the sentence of excommunication against the incestuous person; *I verily, as absent in body, but present in Spirit, have judged,* or pronounced sentence, *already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath done this deed,* 1 Cor. v. 3. and what he orders them to do,

ver. 4, 5. was only to declare and execute his sentence. And 2 Cor. xiii. 2. he threatens them *that heretofore had sinned, that, if he came again, he would not spare them:* and that by his *not sparing them* he meant that he would proceed against them with ecclesiastical censure, is evident from verse 1. *In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established;* which are the very words of our Saviour, Matth. xviii. 16. when he instituted the power of censuring: and then, verse 10. he tells them, *that he wrote these things being absent, lest being present he should use severity, according to the power which the Lord had given him to edification, and not to destruction;* by which it is plain he means the power of excommunicating: and 1 Cor. iv. 21. he threatens to *come to them with a rod;* that is, to chastise them with the censures of the church; and with this rod, as he himself tells us, he chastised Hymenæus and Alexander, two stickling heretics in the church of Ephesus, whom *he delivered unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme,* 1 Tim. i. 20. And as he frequently executed the censures of the church in his own person, so he derived this spiritual jurisdiction to Timothy and Titus, whom he ordained apostles or bishops of the church of Ephesus and Crete: for so he orders Timothy; *Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses;* which plainly implies his authority to examine and try the causes even of the elders themselves, when they were accused, and to punish them, if he found them guilty: for so it follows; *Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear,* 1 Tim. v. 20. So also he exhorts Titus to exercise this his spi-

ritual jurisdiction; *A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject,* Tit. iii. 10. which plainly implies, that he had an authority inherent in him, as he was the apostle or bishop of Crete, to cite, examine, admonish, and censure persons of erroneous principles: and the same authority, it is evident, was inherent in the angels or bishops of the seven churches of Asia. Thus the bishop of Ephesus had authority to try such as said *they were apostles, and were not,* and to convict them for liars, Rev. ii. 2. and the bishop of Pergamus is blamed for tolerating the sect of the Nicolaitanes in his church, ver. 14, 15. and so also is the bishop of Thyatira, for *suffering that woman Jezebel,* ver. 20. which plainly implies, that the authority of curbing and correcting those profligate sectaries was inherent in them; else why should they be blamed, any more than others, for not restraining them? From all which it is evident, that the power of Christian jurisdiction was originally seated in the apostolate; and that throughout the apostolic age it was always exercised by such, and only such, as were admitted into that sovereign order, viz. either by the twelve prime apostles, or by those secondary apostles whom they ordained bishops of particular churches: and accordingly we find in the primitive ages the bishops were the sole administrators of this spiritual jurisdiction, and though ordinarily they administered it with the advice and concurrence of their presbytery, yet this was more than they thought themselves obliged to; for thus St. Cyprian, in the time of his recess, did by his own single authority excommunicate Felicissimus, Augendus, and others of his presbyters, Ep. 38, 39. and when Rogatianus, a bi-

shop of his metropolitic church, complained to him in a synod of a disorderly deacon, he tells him, that *pro episcopatus vigore et cathedræ authoritate*, i. e. by his own episcopal authority, without appealing to the synod, he might have chastised him. And the fifth canon of the first Nicene council plainly shews, that it was then the judgment of the catholic church, that the power of spiritual jurisdiction was wholly seated in the bishops; for it decrees, that in every province there should be twice a year a council of bishops, to examine whether any person, lay or clergy, had been unjustly excommunicated by his bishop; which shews, that then this sentence was inflicted by the bishop only; though afterwards, to prevent abuses, it was decreed in the council of Carthage, that "the bishop should hear no "man's cause but in the presence of his clergy; and "that his sentence should be void, unless it were "confirmed by their presence;" but yet still the sentence was peculiarly his, and not his clergy's. In some churches indeed the bishops did many times delegate power to their presbyters, both to excommunicate and absolve, (as perhaps St. Paul himself did in the church of Corinth;) but in this case the presbyter was only the bishop's mouth, and his sentence received all its force from that episcopal authority he was armed with.

IV. Another peculiar ministry of the bishops and governors of the church is to confirm such as have been baptized and instructed in Christianity; which ministry was always performed by prayer and *laying on of hands*, upon which the party so confirmed received the gift of the Holy Ghost. It is true, upon the first institution of this imposition of hands, the

extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, such as speaking with tongues, &c. were many times consequent; but from hence it doth no more follow that it was intended only for an extraordinary ministry, that was to cease with those extraordinary gifts that accompanied it, than that preaching was so, which at first was also attended with miraculous operations. The great intendment of those extraordinary effects was to attest the efficacy of the function: and doth it therefore follow that the function must cease, because those extraordinary effects did so, after they had sufficiently attested its efficacy, and consequently were of no farther use? if so, then all the other ministries of Christianity must be expired as well as this. And what though those extraordinary gifts of the Spirit are ceased? Yet since our Saviour hath promised a continual communication of his Spirit to his church, is it not highly reasonable to believe, that he still continues to communicate it by the very same ministry of prayer and imposition of hands whereby he communicated it first; and that he now derives to us the ordinary operation of it in the same way that he first derived the extraordinary ones? Especially considering that this *laying on of hands* is placed by the apostle in the same class with baptism, and made one of the *principles of the doctrine of Christ*, Heb. vi. 1, 2. and therefore must without all doubt be intended for a standing ministry in the church; and as such the church of Christ in all ages has thought herself obliged to receive and practise it; but as for the administration of it, it was always appropriated to the apostles and bishops. So in Acts xix. 5, 6. it was St. Paul that

laid his hands on the Ephesians after they were baptized in the name of Jesus; whereupon it is said, that the *Holy Ghost came upon them:* and in Acts viii. we read, that when St. Peter by his preaching and miracles had converted the Samaritans, and afterwards baptized them, St. Peter and St. John, two of the apostles, were sent to lay hands on them, upon which it is said, that *they received the Holy Ghost,* ver. 17. By which it appears that this ministry of confirmation appertained to the apostles; since St. Philip, though a worker of miracles, a preacher, a prime deacon, and, if we may believe St. Cyprian, one of the seventy-two disciples, would not presume to assume it, but left it to the apostles as their peculiar province. And accordingly in the primitive church it was always performed by the hands of the bishops; for though from later ages some probable instances are produced of some presbyters that confirmed in the bishop's absence, or by his delegation, yet in all primitive antiquity we have neither any one canon nor example of it. From whence we may fairly conclude, that this imposition of hands for confirmation was peculiar to the apostles, in the original, and to their successors the bishops in the continuation of it.

SECT. XI.

Of Christ's regal acts in his kingdom.

HAVING in the foregoing section given an account of the several ministers which Christ employs in the administration of his kingdom, we proceed, in the next place, to inquire what those acts of

royalty are which he himself exerts in his kingdom, and by which he perpetually rules and governs it: and these may be distributed into three orders:

First, Such as he hath performed once for all.

Secondly, Such as he hath always performed, and will still continue to perform.

Thirdly, Such as are yet to be performed by him before the surrender of his kingdom.

First, One sort of the royal acts of our Saviour are those which he hath performed once for all: and these are reducible to three particulars:

I. His giving laws to his kingdom.

II. His mission of the Holy Spirit to subdue men's minds to the obedience of those laws, and to govern them by them.

III. His erecting an external polity or form of government in his kingdom.

I. One of those regal acts which Christ hath performed in his kingdom once for all is giving laws to it; and this he performed while he was upon earth in those excellent sermons and discourses which he then preached and delivered to the world. For though he preached as a prophet, yet it was as a royal prophet, as one that had regal authority to enact what he delivered into laws; for he was a king while he was upon earth, so that all his prophecies were enforced with his regal authority, and he commanded as he was a king whatsoever he taught as he was a prophet. Indeed, had he been a mere prophet, he could not have obliged men by any legislative authority of his own to believe and obey him; his declarations had had no farther force in them than as they expressed the will and command of the Almighty Sovereign of the

world; and if what he declared had not been law before, it could not have been made law by his declaring it. But being a royal prophet, his words were laws, and all his declarations carried a commanding power in them. And hence the gospel is called the *law of Christ*, Gal. vi. 2. and *the law of the Spirit of life* in or *by Christ Jesus*, Rom. viii. 2. and that command of loving our neighbour as ourself is called the *royal law*, i. e. the law of Christ our King, James ii. 8. for this our Saviour calls *his commandment*, John xv. 12. and *his new commandment*, viz. *That ye love one another, even as I have loved you*, John xiii. 34. And not only this, but all other duties of the gospel are called *his commandments*, John xiv. 21. and Matt. xxviii. 20. By all which it is evident, that in revealing his gospel to the world he did not only perform the part of a prophet, but also of a legislator, and that by his own inherent authority, as he was a king, he stamped those doctrines into laws which he taught and delivered as a prophet. And such as his kingly power is, such are his laws and commandments; he is a spiritual king, a king of souls, of wills, and of affections; and accordingly his laws are spiritual, and do extend their obligation to the souls, and wills, and affections of his subjects. For they not only oblige our outward man, but also the inmost motions of our heart; they lay their reins upon our thoughts and desires, as well as upon our words and actions; and give directions to our inward intentions, as well as to our outward actions. So that to satisfy their demands, it is not sufficient that we do well, unless we also intend well; that the matter of our actions be good, unless the aim and design of them be so

also: for according to the tenor of these spiritual laws, a bad intention unconsecrates the best actions, and converts even our prayers and our alms into the most loathsome cheats and dissimulations, (vid. Matt. vi. 1—6. 16, 17, 18.) And as they oblige our inward intentions to good ends, so they also restrain our inward concupiscence from evil objects, so far forth at least as it falls under the command and disposal of our wills. For they not only forbid us the doing of evil actions, but also the consenting to them, and even the taking pleasure in the contemplation of them; and the very affection to any bad action, if it be voluntary and consented to, is, in the construction of these laws, the same with the commission of it; for so hatred is construed *murder*, 1 John iii. 15. covetousness, *theft* or *robbery*, Mark vii. 22. inordinate lusting after a woman, *adultery*, Matt. v. 28. And so in general the wicked will is, in the construction of these laws, the wicked action it chooses and consents to. Thus the laws of our Saviour (to whose all-seeing eye our inmost motions are as obvious as our most open practice) do as well take notice of our vicious affections, those internal springs and fountains of iniquity, as of the vicious actions which stream out from them; and we are as well accountable to them for harbouring the desire of sin, when we have not the convenience or opportunity to act it, for consenting to it (though we never commit it) whenever opportunity occurs, yea, and for indulging to ourselves the phantastic pleasures of sinful meditations, which are but the antepasts of the actions, and, as the twilight to a dark night, but the first approaches toward the deeds of darkness, as for the sinful actions themselves. This therefore

is the common nature of the laws of our Saviour, that they are all of them spiritual, and do in the first place lay hold upon our wills, and bind our inward man, and from thence extend their obligation to the outward actions. They begin with that which is the principle of all moral good and evil, and by rectifying the spring and wheels of our will and affections within, communicate a regular motion to the hand of our practice without.

But, for our better understanding the nature of these laws, and the obligations they devolve upon us, it will be necessary to consider them more particularly, they being all reducible under two heads; first, the law of perfection; and secondly, the law of sincerity. Both which require of us the same instances of piety and virtue, though not in the same degree, nor under the same penalty.

1. There is the law of perfection, which requires the utmost degrees of every Christian virtue which in the several states and periods of our lives we are capable of attaining to. For so we are enjoined, not only to *do*, but *to abound in the work of the Lord*; not only to *have* grace, but to *grow* in it; to *perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord*; and to *be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect.* For the nature of God is the standard of that perfection whereunto we are obliged to aspire, and our growth in piety and virtue is never to come to a period, till we *are pure as he is pure, and holy as he is holy*, i. e. till we are arrived to infinite holiness, which because our finite nature can never do in any period of duration, therefore we are to be growing on to eternity. So that this law, by prescribing no limits to the degrees of our growth, hath cut out work

enough for us to employ all our faculties for ever. Not that it is a sin against it for a man to be short or defective of the utmost degree of perfection; for it requires no more of us than what is within our present possibility, which always increases proportionably to our present improvements. When we are arrived but to one degree of virtue, it is no sin against this law of perfection that we do not thence immediately ascend to six or seven, because it is not in our power, and no law can oblige to an impossibility; but when we have acquired one, that gives us power to acquire a second, and that a third, and so on *ad infinitum*. Thus our obligation to be more and more perfect increases proportionably to the improvement of our power; for the end of all power either to be good or to do good, is to be good and to do good; and therefore the more power we have to be good, the better we ought to be, otherwise our power is in vain. While we are but babes in Christ, or beginners in religion, we have not that strength and power as when we are men, and have made a considerable progress; and therefore we are not then obliged to all those degrees of growth and perfection; but whatsoever degree is within our power in the different stages of our growth and progress, that we are actually and immediately obliged to; and so long as we are defective in it, we are offenders against the law of perfection. As for example, Mark xii. 30. our Saviour commands us to *love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength;* that is, that we should always love him as much as we can: but it is as much in our power to love him still more, when we

love much, as when we love him little: and so we are equally bound still to love him as much as we can, when we have ten degrees of power, as we were when we had but one. So that by this command we are obliged always to love God as much as we are able, and thereby to be always augmenting our ability to love him; and as our ability increases, to be always loving him more and more for ever. Now the penalty by which this law obliges us is not eternal damnation, (and God forbid it should, for then I doubt no flesh would be saved,) but only the deprivation of some degrees of future happiness, which is no more than what is the natural consequence of all defects of goodness; for so essential is goodness to our future happiness, that proportionably as we fall short of the one, we must necessarily be defective of the other; and accordingly the scripture tells us, that proportionably to our non-improvements in this life, God will substract from our reward in the life to come: for *he that soweth sparingly*, saith the apostle, *shall reap sparingly, and he that soweth abundantly shall reap abundantly*, 2 Cor. ix. 6. And our Saviour by a parable doth expressly teach us, that our future reward shall be apportioned to the degrees of our present improvements, Luke xix. where he represents himself as a master coming to take account of his servants, among whom he had intrusted a stock of ten pounds, delivering to every one an equal share. The first, by an extraordinary diligence, had improved his pound into ten; and he is rewarded accordingly with the government of ten cities, verse 16, 17. the other had been faithful, though not altogether so diligent, and by his one pound had gained

five, and accordingly he is made lord of five cities, verse 18, 19. By which he plainly declares, that by so much as we fall short of those improvements we might have made in piety and virtue, so much he will substract from our future reward. So that the sense of the law of perfection is this; As you would not incur the forfeiture of some degrees of your happiness in the other life, be sure you employ your utmost diligence in this, to improve yourselves in every grace and virtue of religion.

2. There is the law of sincerity, which requires the being and reality of all Christian graces and virtues in us, together with the proper acts and exercises of them, as we have opportunity, and doth no farther forbid those gradual defects of them, which are within our possibility to supply, than as they are the effects of our gross, continued, and wilful neglect, and so inconsistent with sincerity. Now the reality of these Christian virtues in us consists in the universal and prevailing consent and resolution of our wills to regulate our practice by them, so as not wilfully to admit of any thing that is contrary to them upon any occasion or temptation whatsoever: and so long as this resolution continues firm, and prevails in our practice, we are just in the eye and judgment of this law of sincerity, though we do not always exert it to the utmost of our possibility. He therefore who hath so submitted his will to God, as to be throughly resolved, without any reserve, to obey him, and not to do any thing that is contrary to his will, either against knowledge, or through affected ignorance, or inconsideration, hath in this resolution the real being of all Christian virtues in him: and so long as this holds, he stands uncon-

demned in the judgment of the law of sincerity. But though this resolution includes in it the being and reality of all Christian virtue, yet doth it not include the utmost possibility of it; nor doth it at all follow, that because I am sincerely resolved to conduct my life by the laws of piety and virtue, therefore I must be in all respects as pious and virtuous as it is possible for me to be, considering my present state and circumstances. I may be sincerely resolved, and yet not be always equally diligent and active. I may now be exceeding vigilant and watchful; and what I am now I may always be, if I always exert the utmost of my possibility: yet it may so happen anon, that though I am sincerely resolved still, I may be more remiss, supine, and inadvertent, and in this posture a temptation may surprise me before I am aware, and hurry me into an action against which I am firmly resolved: and there is no doubt, but even the best of men might have been much better than they are, had they always kept pace with their possibilities, and applied themselves with their utmost skill and diligence to the methods and ministries of improvement. Now though not to exert our utmost power in the avoidance of evil and the improvement of ourselves in virtue and goodness, is doubtless a sin, yet it is only a sin against the law of perfection, the penalty of which is only deprivation of some degree of our future reward; but so long as we keep up a prevailing resolution in our wills to govern our lives by the laws of piety and virtue, we stand clear in the eye of the law of sincerity, the penalty of which is no less than everlasting exile from the presence of God into the dark and horrible regions of endless misery

and despair: only this proviso it admits, that if after we have sinned against it we reassume our good resolution, and heartily repent and amend, we shall be released from the obligation to this dreadful penalty, and be restored to that happy state of grace and favour from whence we fell by our transgression. So that the great difference between the law of perfection and the law of sincerity is this, that the penalty of the latter is much more severe, but the duty of the former much more comprehensive. Having thus given this brief account of our Saviour's legislation and laws, I proceed to the

II. Of those regal acts which Christ hath performed in his kingdom once for all; and that is, his mission of the Holy Spirit to subdue men's minds to the obedience of his laws, and to govern them by them. For so the apostle makes the mission of the Spirit to succeed the triumphal progress of our Saviour to his coronation in heaven, Eph. iv. 8. *He ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, he gave gifts unto men;* where by the gifts which he gave we are to understand the Holy Spirit, and in him all those extraordinary gifts which he poured out upon his church on the day of Pentecost: for so, Acts ii. 33. St. Peter makes the effusion of the Spirit by Christ to be the consequence of his advancement to his universal royalty; *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.* Now the end for which he sent his Spirit was to supply his room when he went from earth, and in his absence to preside as his vicegerent in his kingdom below. Since therefore this blessed Spirit acts

as our Saviour's agent, whatsoever he doth, that our Saviour doth by him. So that all those operations he performs, in order to the subduing us to the obedience of Christ, and to the governing of us when we are subdued, are truly the operations of Christ himself. It is he that conquers and governs us by his Spirit, our hearts are the territories which Christ invades by him, and his inspirations are the victorious arms by which Christ conquers and subdues them. Our wills are the thrones on which Christ sits, and rules, and governs by him, and his holy suggestions are the awful powers by which Christ himself commands our obedience. But what it is that this blessed Spirit doth and hath done in order to the subduing men to Christ's laws, and governing them by them, hath been already shewn at large: and therefore of this I shall need say no more at present.

III. And lastly; Therefore, another of those regal acts which Christ hath once for all performed in his heavenly kingdom is, his erecting in it an external polity and government. What this polity is, and what are the functions of it, hath been shewn at large, and it is as well by this external government as by the internal ministry of his Spirit, that Christ now rules his kingdom; for in all just and lawful things the lawful governors of his church do act by his commission and authority, as being substituted by him the visible representatives of his person, and the executors and administrators of his power and dominion. Whilst therefore they act within the compass of their commission, they act in his stead, and as his vicegerents; and whatsoever they bind he binds, and whatsoever they loose he looses; their commands are his, their decrees and sentences

are his; and all their authoritative acts carry with them the same force and obligation, as if they had been performed by him in his own person. For it is he that wills, and speaks, and acts by them, because they will, and speak, and act by his authority. For so he himself declares to them, Luke x. 16. *He that heareth you heareth me,* i. e. because I speak by you; *and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me;* because my authority is in you even as my Father is in me; and therefore he who despises mine in you, despises my Father's in me, whence mine in you is derived. Your authority is mine, and mine is my Father's; and therefore he who rejects yours doth therein reject both my Father's and mine. And this authority is given them by Christ for the same end that his authority was given him by the Father; for he came into the world *to seek and to save lost souls,* Luke xix. 10. He *came not to judge the world, but to save the world,* John xii. 47. and *to call sinners to repentance,* Mark ii. 17. And upon the very same errand he sent all those whom he appointed to propagate and govern his kingdom in his absence; for he set them up as so many lights to the benighted world, to reduce men from those dangerous paths in which they were wandering to eternal misery, and shew them the way to everlasting happiness; and all the power he devolved upon them was for *edification, and not for destruction,* 2 Cor. xiii. 10. and to them he hath committed the care and charge of souls, whose blood he will one day require at their hands, if they miscarry through their neglect or default, Heb. xiii. 17. And that he might the better secure these precious beings,

for whom he shed his blood, from miscarrying for ever, he placed this spiritual polity in a subordination of officers, and made the inferior accountable for their charge to the superior officers, as well as both accountable to himself. So that whereas had he placed it in coordinate hands, there had been only one soul accountable to him for each particular cure or charge of souls, because then each single pastor would have been supreme in his particular cure, and consequently no other pastor or pastors would have been accountable for not calling him to account: now each particular cure of souls is under the charge and inspection of several orders and degrees of pastors; who in their several stations are all accountable for it to the tribunal of Christ. For first the inferior pastor, who hath the immediate charge of it, and is obliged by his office to teach and instruct it by good example and doctrine, and to administer to it the holy ordinances of Christianity, stands accountable to Christ for every soul in it that miscarries through his neglect or omission; next, the bishop stands accountable for not correcting the neglects and misdemeanours of the inferior pastor; and then the metropolitan for not taking cognizance of the default of the bishop. Thus in that excellent form of government which Christ hath established in his kingdom, he hath made all possible provision for the safety and welfare of souls; for according to this economy he hath taken no less than a threefold security, every one of which is as much as a soul amounts to, that every soul within every cure shall be plentifully supplied with the means of salvation; that so none of them might miscarry, but such as are incorrigibly obsti-

nate. So that now if any soul, within the dominion of our Saviour, perish for want of the means of salvation, there are no less than three souls, one after another, besides itself, accountable to him for its ruin. Having thus shewn what these regal acts are which Christ hath once for all performed in his kingdom, I proceed,

II. To declare what those regal acts are which he hath always performed, and doth always continue to perform: and these are reducible to four particulars.

First, His pardoning penitent sinners.

Secondly, His punishing obstinate offenders.

Thirdly, His protecting and defending his faithful subjects in this life.

Fourthly, His blessing and rewarding them in the life to come.

I. One of the regal acts which our Saviour always hath, and always continues to perform, is, his pardoning and forgiving penitent sinners; which being one of the articles of our creed, I shall endeavour to give an account of it more at large. The apostle defines sin to be a *transgression of the law*, 1 John iii. 4. Now the law obliges us under a certain stated penalty to do and forbear what it commands and forbids. Whenever therefore we transgress the law, we are thereby obliged to undergo the penalty it denounces; and this is that which we call the guilt of sin, viz. its obligation to punishment; and it is this guilt which pardon and forgiveness relates to. For to pardon is nothing else but only to release the sinner from the obligation he lies under to suffer the penalty of the law. Now the penalty of the law of God for every known and wilful sin is no less than

everlasting perdition; and therefore from this it is that we are released by that pardon and indemnity which the gospel proposes. So that the pardon or remission of sins, whereof we are now treating, consists in the loosing of sinful men from that obligation to eternal punishment whereunto they have rendered themselves liable by their wilful disobedience to the law of God. Since therefore this pardon consists in the release of offenders from the penal obligation of the law, it must be a regal act; because the obligation of the law can be dispensed with by no other authority but that which made it: and therefore since to make the obligation of the law is an act of regal authority, to release or dispense with it must necessarily be so also; and accordingly forgiveness of sin is in scripture attributed to our Saviour as one of his regal rights, Acts v. 31. *Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.* So that now it is by Christ immediately that our sins are pardoned, and our souls released from those obligations to eternal punishment in which they have involved us: *For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son,* John v. 22. So that now it is by him immediately that the Father judgeth us, i. e. absolves and condemns us; for so, Col. iii. 13. the apostle exhorts them to *forbear and forgive one another, even as Christ forgave them.* and Col. ii. 13. Christ is said to *have forgiven them all trespasses.* It is true, forgiveness of sin is in scripture frequently attributed to the Father as well as to the Son: so 1 John i. 9. *If we confess our sins, he* (i. e. the Father) *is faithful and just to*

forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness; and Eph. iv. 32. *Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.* From whence it is plain, that forgiveness of sin appertains to God as well as Christ, and that both have their appropriate shares in it; and therefore since it is impossible that the same individual action should proceed from two distinct agents, in this act of forgiveness the Father must do something which the Son doth not, and the Son must do something which the Father doth not. They must both of them act an appropriate part in it, and each have a distinct agency from each other. For the fuller explication therefore of this article, I shall endeavour to shew, first, what it is which the Father doth in forgiving sins; and, secondly, what the Son doth.

I. What it is that the Father doth in this act of forgiveness of sin. To which in short I answer, that the Father's part herein is to make a general grant of pardon to offenders, upon such a consideration as he shall think meet to accept, and with such a limitation and restriction as he shall think fit to make; which general grant is nothing else but those glad tidings of the gospel which he proclaimed to the world by Jesus Christ; viz. that in consideration of Christ's death and sacrifice he would freely forgive all penitent and believing sinners their personal obligation to eternal punishment, and receive them into grace and favour. So that in forgiving our sins there are these three things peculiar to God the Father: first, his making a general grant of pardon to us: secondly, his making it in consideration of Christ's death and sacrifice: thirdly, his making it

with those restrictions and limitations of faith and repentance.

First, One thing peculiar to God the Father in forgiving sins, is his making a general grant of pardon and forgiveness to sinners. For the law against which all men had sinned, and by which they were obliged to eternal punishment, was strictly and properly the law of God the Father, who being the first and supreme Person in the Godhead, was consequently always the first and supreme in the divine dominion. Now the divine dominion consisting (even as all other dominions do) of a legislative and executive power, the Father must be supreme in both, and consequently the laws of the divine dominion must be more especially and peculiarly his. And hence it is called *the will of the Father*, Matth. vii. 21. So in the Lord's Prayer the divine law is in a peculiar manner styled the will of God the Father; *Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven:* Matth. xii. 50. our Saviour styles it *the will of his Father which is in heaven:* and elsewhere the commandment of his Father, (vide John xii. 50. Matth. xv. 3, 6. Mark vii. 8, 9.) By all which it is evident, that the divine law, against which we have all offended, and by which we are obliged to punishment, is appropriately and peculiarly the will and commandment of *God the Father;* and it being so, the right of exacting or remitting the punishment of this law must be peculiarly and appropriately inherent in him. For the penalty of the law is due to him whose law it is, and it is he alone can loose us from it who bound it upon us; so that it was the Father's peculiar, as to give the law, so to indemnify offenders from the penalty

of it; and accordingly we find that public grant of pardon, which through Jesus Christ is made to sinners, is in scripture every where attributed to the Father. So we are told, that it is *God who for Christ's sake hath forgiven us*, Eph. iv. 32. and that it is *God who hath set forth Christ to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past—that he might be just, and the justifier of them that believe in Jesus*, Rom. iii. 25, 26. that it was *God* who *was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them*, 2 Cor. v. 19. and, in a word, that it is God who *is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*, 1 John i. 9. Where his being *faithful and just* plainly refers to some public grant and promise by which he hath obliged himself to penitent offenders. And indeed the whole new covenant, in which this public grant of remission of sins is contained, (vide Heb. viii. 12.) is the act and deed of God the Father; it was he that, in consideration of Christ's death and sacrifice, granted this grand charter of mercy to the world: for seeing it was to the Father that that sacrifice was offered, in consideration of which the new covenant was granted, (vide Eph. iv. 2. compared with Col. i. 20.) the grant of it must necessarily be from the Father. And as it was the Father that made this public grant of remission to sinners, so,

Secondly, It was he that made it in consideration of Christ's death and sacrifice. For so Christ himself tells us, that it was by *commandment which he received from his Father that he laid down his life*, John x. 17, 18. and when he was going to offer up

himself upon the cross, he tells his disciples, John xiv. 31. *As the Father gave me commandment, even so do I: arise, let us go hence;* i. e. to execute that command which the Father hath given me, to *lay down my life for the sheep,* John x. 15. From whence it is evident, that it was the Father who exacted the death and sacrifice of Christ in consideration of that public grant of forgiveness which he made to the world; for it was *through his blood that we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his* (i. e. the Father's) *grace,* Eph. i. 7. and that blood of his was *an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour,* Eph. v. 2. So that it was God the Father that did both exact and accept the sacrifice of Christ, which, as I have shewed at large, vol. ii. ch. 7. sect. 4. was in consideration of his pardoning and forgiving sinners.

Thirdly, and lastly, It was God the Father also that made this grant of forgiveness to us with these restrictions and limitations of our believing and repenting. For as the promises of the covenant were his, in which remission of sin is proposed to us, so must the conditions of it be also, by which it is limited and restrained: because it can belong to none but the giver to limit and conditionate his own gifts and grants. Now the conditions of our forgiveness are faith and repentance, or rather, the condition of it is such a faith, such a lively and active belief in Jesus Christ, as doth beget in us sincere repentance and renovation of life: for so St. Paul tells us again and again, that it is by faith that we are justified or pardoned, Rom. iii. 28. v. 1. Gal. ii. 16. iii. 24. Where by faith it is evident he doth not mean any one single act of faith, of what kind or denomination soever,

but faith as it is the pregnant root and active principle of repentance and newness of life. For it is granted on all hands, that that faith which acquits and justifies us before God must be lively and operative; and indeed, unless it be so, it is not distinguishable from presumption, which is only the carcass, or lifeless image and portraiture of faith. So that if this be justifying, it is all one whether you call it justifying faith or justifying presumption; and he that can lay hold on the righteousness of Christ, though it be with profane and sacrilegious hands, will be as certainly justified as the most humble and penitent soul. At which rate a man may rest upon Christ without coming to him, and lay hold upon him at the greatest distance from him; he may lean upon his merits in open defiance to his laws, and embrace and crucify him together. It being granted therefore that that faith which justifies us must be lively and operative, it is from hence most evident, that the condition of our justification is no one single act of faith, but comprehends in it all that repentance and new obedience which is the effect of the life and operation of faith. For if, to make it the condition of our justification, it be necessary that our faith should work by love, and be operative and obediential; then that it should be lively and operative is as necessary to our justification as that it should be faith: for where only an accident or mode of a thing is made a condition with the thing, it is equally a condition with the thing itself. As for instance, if I promise one such a reward, upon condition he presents me with such a book, so bound, and of such an edition, it is equally a condition, and as much influential on the man's right to my promise, that it

should be so bound, and of such an edition, as that it should be the book for which I conditioned: and so in any other instance you can bring, either in fact or fiction. And the same reason holds good, whether we take faith for a condition or an instrument, (as some improperly enough call it:) for if to be lively and operative is a necessary qualification to make faith an instrument of our justification, then its liveliness and operation is instrumental too: for that mode of a thing which makes it instrumental is as really instrumental as the thing itself. As for instance, a knife is an instrument of cutting, but it is its sharpness that makes it to be so; and therefore it is as instrumental to cutting that it should be sharp, as that it should be a knife. And indeed, whether we consider either the form or matter of our justification and pardon, it will evidently appear, that that faith which justifies us must be such as includes in it repentance and new obedience. For as for the form of justification, it is a juridical act founded upon a legal process, in which there is always a judge, a criminal, and a law: and here the judge is God, the criminal, man, the law, the law of sincerity, or those affirmative and negative commands of the Christian religion that are established with the threats of eternal condemnation: for so, James ii. 12. the apostle tells us that we must be *judged by the law of liberty*, i. e. the moral law, as it is expounded and perfected by our Saviour; for so ver. 8. *If ye fulfil the royal law, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well.* So that that law of liberty by which we must be judged is this royal law, and this royal law is the moral law, which requires us to love our neighbour as ourselves. Now this moral law is to be con-

sidered under a twofold notion, as it is a law of works, and as it is a law of grace. As it is a law of works, it exacts perfect and unsinning obedience, and neither promises grace to enable us to keep it, nor admits repentance when we have broken it. As it is a law of grace, it exacts only sincere obedience, and both promises grace to enable us thereunto, and admits repentance in case of wilful disobedience. Now considering it under the first notion, it is the same with the law of nature, and as such, it obliges all men that are in the state of nature, or without the pale of Christianity, who have neither promise of grace to enable them to obey, nor yet of pardon upon repentance after they have once disobeyed it. In which forlorn condition they remain till such time as they embrace Christianity, and are by baptism admitted into the kingdom of Christ; and from thenceforth the obligation of it, as it is a law of works, ceaseth, and it obliges them only as it is a law of grace, i. e. as it is a law which exacts of them only sincere obedience, and promises both to assist them to obey, and upon their repentance to pardon their disobedience. So that considering the moral law as it is a law of works, it neither justifies nor accounts just any but the perfectly innocent, nor yet indulges pardon to any that have offended upon any condition whatsoever; and therefore the infidel world, who alone are under the obligation of it, are said to be *strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope*, i. e. no hope founded upon promise, none but what an absolute and unpromised mercy affords them, Eph. ii. 12. And then, if we consider it as it is a law of grace, it justifies, or accounts just, none but the sincerely obedient, and indulges pardon to

no offenders whatsoever, but such as are sincerely penitent; so that we Christians, who alone are under the obligation of it, can neither be justified by it but upon our sincere obedience, nor, when we fail of that, be pardoned by it but upon our unfeigned repentance. Since therefore it is by the moral law, considered as a law of grace, that God doth judge us, he can acquit us by it upon no other terms, but only our performing of what it requires, i. e. our hearty repentance for our past sins, and sincere obedience for the future. For seeing it requires this of us under the penalty of eternal condemnation, we are obliged by it to this penalty, till we have performed what it requires: and to be at the same time acquitted by a law and obliged to the penalty of it is a contradiction. Did this law of grace require of us nothing but faith, and threaten condemnation for nothing but infidelity, then indeed our bare believing in Jesus were sufficient to discharge us from our obligation to its penalty; but since it also requires of us repentance and sincere obedience, under the same penalty that it requires faith, our faith cannot be sufficient to discharge us from its penalty, unless it be such as includes in it repentance and sincere obedience. In short, the law of grace condemns us as well for impiety, injustice, and uncharitableness, as for infidelity: and therefore we cannot be acquitted by it upon forsaking our infidelity, unless we also forsake our impiety, &c. and while we continue in any one wilful sin, for which it condemns, it is impossible that at the same time we should be acquitted and pardoned by it: so that unless our faith be such as doth include in it a renunciation of all wilful sin, or, which is the same thing, repentance and

sincere obedience, we cannot be acquitted upon it by the law of grace.

And then, if we consider the matter of our pardon and remission, which is nothing but a releasing us from our obligation to punishment, it will from thence also appear, that that faith upon which we obtain our pardon must be such as works in us sincere repentance and obedience. For the punishment to which we are obliged by the law of grace consists in the loss of heaven, as well as in the positive torments of hell; and therefore our pardon must include a release from both. But to be released from our obligation of losing heaven, is the same thing as to have a right of enjoying it conferred upon us; so that the faith upon which we are pardoned and forgiven is the faith upon which we are entitled to heaven, and which, as all agree, includes in it repentance and sincere obedience. For these two things are of undoubted certainty, that every man shall go to heaven that dies entitled to it; and that no man shall go to heaven that dieth in impenitence and wilful disobedience. For it is our keeping the commandments of God that gives us *a right to the tree of life*, Rev. xxii. 14. and our keeping God's commandments is that *holiness without which no man shall see God*, Heb. xii. 14. And accordingly in scripture the remission of our sins is attributed to our repentance and obedience, as well as to our faith. So Acts iii. 19. *Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.* And in 1 John i. 7. *If ye walk in the light, as he is in the light, you have communion with him, and the blood of Christ cleanseth you from all sin.*

So also Acts x. 34, 35. *God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him.* From whence it is evident, that when the scripture makes mention of faith only in the matter of our justification, it is to be understood of faith in the greatest latitude, as comprehending repentance and sincere obedience: for how can we be justified by faith only, and yet be justified by obedience too, unless our obedience be included in our faith? And indeed the scripture plainly declares that faith itself is not at all available with God, unless it be accompanied with sincere obedience. So Gal. v. 6. *In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love:* and what he means by *faith working by love* he tells us, Gal. vi. 15. *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the new creature:* and what he means by the *new creature* he also tells us, 1 Cor. vii. 19. *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God:* so that the only thing which avails us with God is *faith working by love. Faith working by love* is *the new creature, the new creature* is *keeping the commandments of God:* and in James ii. 26. we are told, that *as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith also is dead without works;* that is, it is altogether ineffectual. For so, if you compare the 14th and 17th verses of this chapter, you will find that those two phrases, *faith cannot save,* and *faith is dead,* do both signify the same thing. Since therefore faith itself without obedience is unavailable, when the scripture makes mention of our *being justified by faith,* it must ne-

cessarily be understood of faith comprehending obedience.

And thus you see what God the Father's part is in remitting our sins, viz. that it consists in granting to us an universal act of pardon and indemnity, in consideration of our Saviour's sacrifice, and upon condition of our sincere repentance and future obedience. And this is the groundwork and foundation of all remission of sins; without which our Saviour himself hath no right to pardon and forgive us. For since the law against which we have all sinned was peculiarly from God the Father, as he is the fountain of divinity, and consequently the head of the divine dominion, it was he peculiarly that was the party offended, and consequently it was he to whom our obligation to punishment was due, and by whom alone it can be released and remitted: and as the grant of remission was wholly in his will and pleasure, so was it also to accept the consideration and appoint the conditions of it. So that now, as none can be pardoned but upon his grant, so neither can his grant be available to any, but upon that consideration which he hath accepted, viz. the precious sacrifice of his own Son, and upon such conditions as he hath appointed; viz. faith working in us sincere repentance and obedience. And accordingly our Saviour, in all that he doth in the part he acts in forgiving sins, proceeds upon and according to this grant of his Father: for it is in the right and upon the consideration and condition of this grant that he forgives us; nor can he forgive any by any other right than that which it gives him, or upon any other consideration than that which it hath admitted, or upon any other condition than that which

it hath specified and determined. And this brings me to the second head I proposed, which was to shew what it is that the Son doth in forgiving sins.

In short therefore, the part which our Saviour bears in it, considered as King under God the Father, is to make an actual and particular application of this general grant of his Father to particular sinners, upon their faith and repentance. For the Father's grant is only a general promise, that we shall be pardoned for Christ's sake whenever we sincerely believe and repent; but the actual pardoning us consists in the application of this general promise to us in particular, by which the general promise of pardon is converted into a particular sentence of pardon. For the promise says thus, *Whosoever believes* and *repents* shall be pardoned: the particular application of the promise says thus, Thou doest believe and repent; and therefore, by virtue of that promise, I pardon and forgive thee. And this is the proper part of our blessed Saviour, who, having first obtained this promise of his Father by his sacrifice upon earth, and then still continuing to obtain of him, by his continual intercession in heaven, royal authority to dispense that promise to us, doth, by virtue of that authority, actually pardon us upon our actual repentance. So that as soon as ever we perform the condition of God's grant of pardon, our Saviour (who knows the inmost thoughts of our hearts, and perfectly discerns our sincerity) immediately pronounces our sentence of pardon, and by a particular application of that general grant to us absolves us from our obligation to eternal punishment, and freely receives us into grace and favour.

For though the completion and publication of our pardon is reserved for the day of judgment, when we shall be absolved from all punishment (i. e. not only of eternal misery, but also of corporal death and temporal sufferings) in the public view and audience of the world; yet it is certain that every penitent believer in Jesus is actually pardoned by him in heaven as soon as ever he believes and repents; that is, he is, *in foro Christi*, and before the tribunal of his royal judgment, absolved from the obligation to suffer eternal misery which he lay under during his state of impenitence; and Christ, in his own mind, judgment, and estimation, hath judicially thus pronounced concerning him: By virtue of my Father's grant to all penitent offenders, and of that royal authority which he hath committed to me, I freely release thee from all that vast debt of everlasting punishment which thou hast too justly incurred by sinning against him. Thus as the Father forgives us virtually by that public grant of mercy, which for Christ's sake he hath made to all penitent offenders; so the Son forgives us actually by that royal authority, which the Father hath given him to make a particular application of that his general grant to us upon our actual repentance; and as it is by the Father's grant that the Son pardons us, so it is by the Son's application of it that the Father pardons us: and therefore we are said *in* or *by* Christ to *have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sin*, Col. i. 14. i. e. to be forgiven for the sake of his blood; in consideration whereof God the Father hath given him power to forgive us. For so he himself tells us, that *all power in heaven and earth was given him*, Matt. xxviii. 18. and

there is no doubt but in *all power* the power of forgiving sins was included; for so St. Peter tells us, that *through his name*, i. e. by his authority or judicial sentence, *whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins*, Acts x. 43.

And thus you see what the first regal act is, which our Saviour hath always performed, and will always continue to perform, viz. forgiving of sins.

II. Another of his regal acts of this kind is punishing obstinate offenders. For as he mediates for his Father in ruling and governing us, he must be the minister of his Father's providence; and being so, whatsoever divine punishments are inflicted upon offenders are to be looked upon as the strokes of his hand, and the ministries of his power; for *he hath the keys of death and hell*, i. e. the power of punishing both here and hereafter, Rev. i. 18. and accordingly he threatens the corrupt churches of Asia, that he would *remove their candlestick*, and that he would *fight against them with the sword of his mouth*, that he would *come upon them as a thief*, and that he would *spue them out of his mouth*, Rev. ii. 5, 16. and chap. iii. 3, 16. All which is a sufficient proof, that the punishment of offenders, both here and hereafter, is committed to him as a branch of that royal authority with which he is invested by the Father. In the execution of which commission he many times chastens bad men in this life, in order to their reformation and amendment; for *as many as I love*, saith he, (i. e. wish well to,) *I rebuke and chasten*, Heb. iii. 19. And many times he persecutes them with exterminating judgments, thereby hanging them up in chains, as it were, as public examples of his vengeance, to

warn and deter the world from treading in their impious footsteps. For so he threatens Jezebel and her followers: *I gave her space to repent of her fornications; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed,* i. e. into a bed-rid and irrecoverable condition, *and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation.—And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works,* Rev. ii. 21, 22, 23. And though, for wise and gracious ends, he oftentimes spares bad men in this life, and sometimes shines upon them a continued day of prosperity, without any cloud or interruption; yet he always overtakes them with the fearful storms of his vengeance in the life to come. For no sooner do their souls depart from their bodies, but they are immediately consigned by his warrant into the hands of evil angels; those skilful, spiteful, and powerful executioners of his justice, under whose savage tyranny they endure all the tortures and agonies that wrath and power of devils, together with their own awakened consciences, and furious and unsatisfied affections, are able to inflict. Of which see vol. i. part 1. chap. 3. For that the souls of bad men are transmitted into a state of wretchedness and misery immediately upon their separation from their bodies, is evident from the parable of Dives and Lazarus; wherein, in the first place, Dives immediately after his death is said to be *in great torment in hell;* and this while his body lay buried in the grave, Luke xvi. 22, 23. which is a plain argument, that in all that interval between death and the resurrection of the body, the souls of bad men

abide in a state of torment: for, secondly, this torment of Dives's soul in hell was then when his brethren were living upon earth, and under the teaching of Moses and the prophets, ver. 27. and 28—31. which shews that our Saviour supposes it to be at that very time when he delivered his parable; and consequently he supposes all bad men who were then dead, and whose condition he represents by that of Dives, to be then in hell, and there suffering unspeakable agonies and torments: and if so, then it is plain, that whenever impenitent souls leave their bodies, they are carried by devils into some dismal abode, and there kept under a perpetual discipline of torments; and in this deplorable state they remain expecting that fearful day of accounts, when their condition, through their reunion to their bodies, and that dread bodily torment they must then be condemned to, will be rendered yet far more intolerable.

III. Another of those regal acts which our Saviour hath always, and always will continue to perform, is, his protecting and defending his kingdom in this world. For thus he promises his faithful church of Philadelphia: *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth,* Rev. iii. 10. By which it is plain that the power of protecting and defending his subjects is inherent in Christ, as an essential part of his regal authority; and this power he continually exercises now he is in heaven: for it was for this end, among others, that he promises to be with his church to the end of the world, Matt. xxviii. 20. namely, to guard and de-

fend it by his providence against the outrageous attempts of its numerous enemies. For it is for this end that the Father *hath put all things in subjection under him, and that he hath left nothing that is not put under him*, Heb. ii. 8. that so, having the universal government of all things in his hand, he might, by his overruling providence, render them all subservient to the interest of his church. For so, Eph. i. 21. we are assured that the Father *hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be head over all things to his church*; i. e. hath vested him with an universal power over all things, that so he might order and direct them all to the interest and advantage of his church. And accordingly now he is in heaven, the defence and preservation of his church is the great business which he intends upon earth. There he now sits looking down from his throne with a watchful eye, to observe all the motions, and trace out all the dark designs of her enemies; and from thence he stretches forth his almighty hand, to guard and defend her against them, to repel or overrule their malice, to drive back their venomous darts upon themselves, or to temper their poison into physic, and extract a healing balm out of the stings of those scorpions. In which how careful and diligent he hath been is abundantly manifest from the glorious success: for considering the vast opposition that hath been made against it, even from its infancy, how is it possible it could ever have subsisted, had it not been guarded by an invisible hand? No sooner did this *light upon a hill* appear in the world, but all the four winds immediately conspired to blow it out; yet, (which is miraculous to consider,) still the harder they blew, the

brighter it flamed; and though for the first three hundred years it was the main and almost constant exercise of the power and policy, the wit and cruelty, both of devils and men to suppress and ruin it, yet still it thrived and increased under the most powerful means of its extirpation. It conquered by suffering, gathered strength by bleeding, and, like a headstrong flood, still the more it was checked the more it swelled and overflowed, till at length *it filled the earth as the waters cover the sea:* which, if well considered, is an amazing instance of the vigilant and powerful providence of our Saviour, which hath not only preserved this burning bush from consuming, but made it spring and flourish in the flames. And though since those primitive persecutions he hath many times, for wise and gracious ends, let loose the wolves upon his flock, and permitted them to worry, and sometimes almost to devour it, yet still he hath kept a strict and steady rein upon their power and malice, and, when they have served his ends, hath checked and stopped them in their savage career, and when they have thought the trembling prey their own, hath stretched out his own almighty arm, and snatched it from their devouring jaws. So that while they are clubbing all their power and policy against it, *he that sits in the heavens laughs them to scorn, the Lord hath them in derision,* and doth contemn their impotent malice, which he can manage as he pleases; he can either prevent the mischievous effects of it, or cause them to recoil upon themselves, or make those very persecutions, with which they design to destroy his church, the means of its enlargement and propagation: and what in his own infallible wisdom he

thinks best, that he hath always done, and will always do for his church and people: for *many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel,* or the church of Christ, *now say: many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet have they not prevailed against me. The ploughers have ploughed upon my back: they have made long furrows: but the Lord is righteous; he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked; and in his own due time will confound and turn back those that hate Sion.* Psalm cxxix. 2—5.

And as he exerciseth a most vigilant providence over his church in general, so doth he also over all the faithful and obedient subjects of it, whose interest is as dear and precious to him as his own blood: for they are not only the purchase of his blood, but also the trophies and conquests of his Spirit, which makes them his by a double propriety, and more peculiarly entitles them to his care and protection: they are living members of his own body, and as such he feels their pains by a most tender sympathy; and therefore his providence is as much concerned for their defence, as his eyelid is to defend *the apple of his own eye,* Zech. ii. 8. and therefore, though he exercises a merciful providence over all men, yet these he encloses out of the common of the world, and fences about with a peculiar care. These are his jewels, and he keeps them in his treasury under the strongest and most inviolable security. He is always watching over them for good; and it is his peculiar and continual concern to protect and defend them, to keep off temptations from their souls and calamities from their bodies; and so to overrule and direct the course of things,

as that whatever befalls them may concentre in their happiness. For though he many times corrects them with his own hand, and permits them to be oppressed and afflicted by others, yet still he doth it with a most gracious intention, either to cure or prevent some disease in their minds, or to excite and exercise their graces, or to wean them from the love of this vain world, and discipline them for a blessed eternity: and whatsoever evils happen to them in the course of his providence, still he takes care to extract good out of them, and so to contrive and order the whole scene of affairs, as that in the issue *all things may still work together for good to them that love God, and are called according to his purpose*, Rom. viii. 28.

IV. And lastly, Another of those regal acts which our Saviour hath always, and doth always continue to perform, is his blessing and rewarding all his faithful subjects in the life to come; for this, as he himself declares, he hath power to do: so Rev. ii. 7. *To him that overcomes will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God;* i. e. I will admit him into a participation of the blessed immortality of heaven: so also Rev. iii. 21. *To him that overcomes, I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I have overcome, and am sat down with my Father on his throne:* and he promises the bishop of the church of Smyrna in particular, *Be thou faithful to the death, and I will give thee a crown of life;* Rev. ii. 10. In all which places he expressly declares his royal authority to reward his faithful subjects, when they leave this world, with the joys and felicities of the world to come: and this authority he is continually exer-

cising in his heavenly kingdom: for whenever any faithful and obedient souls depart from their bodies, he presently sends forth his angelic messengers to conduct them safe to the immortal regions, and there to lodge them in some one of those blissful mansions in his Father's house, which he went before to prepare for them; where, free from all the disturbances of flesh and blood, and of a vexatious and tumultuous world, they live in continued ease, content, and joy, wrapt up with the ever-growing delights of contemplating, loving, and imitating God, and of the most wise and amicable society and communication with each other, in the enjoyment of an endless bliss and pleasure: for so we are assured from scripture that the happiness of the righteous doth commence from the moment of their departure hence. So Revel. xiv. 13. *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.* And with St. Paul it was the same thing to *depart from hence and to be with Christ*, Phil. i. 23. which necessarily implies, that upon his departure he expected to be immediately with Christ. And elsewhere he teaches, that *to be at home in the body was to be absent from the Lord, and to be absent from the body to be present with the Lord*, 2 Cor. v. 6, 8. neither of which can be true, if the souls of good men go not to heaven immediately when they go from hence. But that they do so is as plain as words can express it in that promise of our Saviour to the penitent thief; *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, This day shalt thou be with me in paradise*, Luke xxiii. 43 From whence it evidently follows, that even in the

very article of a true penitent's death, heaven's joys do attend his departing soul to receive it immediately when it is dislodged from the body. Thus in the very moment of its departure hence, the pious soul is transported to those blessed abodes beyond the stars, which are the proper seat and pure element of happiness, where the blessed inhabitants live in a continued fruition of their utmost wishes, being every moment entertained with fresh and enravishing scenes of pleasure; where all their happiness is eternal, and all their eternity nothing else but only one continued act of love, and praise, and joy, and triumph; where there are no sighs or tears, no intermixtures of sorrow or misery, but every heart is full of joy, and every joy is quintessence, and every happy moment is crowned with some fresh and new enjoyment. But of this blessed state I have given an account at large, vol. i. part 1. ch. 1. and 3. And this is that blessed reward with which our Saviour crowns his faithful subjects immediately upon their departure hence; so that he doth not permit them to lie sleeping in the dust unrewarded, till the end of the world, but as soon as they have finished their work upon earth admits them to the joy of their Master, to all the felicities that their separated spirits are capable of in those several degrees and measures of perfection which they there arrive to; in which happy state they remain during their separation from the body, expecting the farther completion of their happiness in a glorious resurrection, by which their bodies and souls being reunited, their whole human nature shall be filled with bliss, to the utmost stretch of its capacity.

And now, having shewn what those regal acts are

which Christ hath always performed, and doth always continue to perform, I proceed, in the

Third and last place, to shew what those regal acts are, which are yet to be performed by him before he surrenders up his kingdom; and these are reducible to three heads:

First, He is yet farther to extend and enlarge his kingdom by the conquest of its enemies.

Secondly, He is yet to destroy death, the last enemy, by giving a general resurrection.

Thirdly, He is yet to judge the world.

I. He is yet farther to extend and enlarge his kingdom by a more universal conquest of its enemies. For if we consult the ancient prophecies concerning the vast extent of our Saviour's kingdom, we shall find that there are a great many of them which as yet were never accomplished: so Psalm ii. 8, 9. *Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.* Whereas hitherto it is certain Christ was never possessed of *the uttermost parts of the earth*, nor did he ever yet break his incorrigible opposers *with a rod of iron, or dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.* So also, Dan. vii. 14. it is foretold of Christ, that *there should be given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him;* and that *all dominions should serve and obey him*, ibid. ver. 27. So also, Dan. ii. 34, 35, 44, 45. that *the stone cut out without hands*, by which all agree is meant the kingdom of Christ, *should become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth, and that*

it should break in pieces and consume all those other kingdoms. Thus also it is foretold that *the Lord should be king over all the earth;* and that *there should be but one Lord, and his name one,* Zech. xiv. 9. and that *he should have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth,* Psal. lxxii. 8. and that *all kings should fall down before him, and all nations serve him,* ibid. ver. 11. and that *all the ends of the earth should remember and turn to the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations worship before him, because the kingdom shall be the Lord's, and he shall govern among the nations.* These, and sundry other such like prophecies there are, which as yet it is certain were never accomplished according to the full import and intent of them. Wherefore we may certainly conclude, that there is a time yet to come, before the consummation of all things, wherein our Saviour will yet once more display the victorious banner of his cross, and, like a mighty man of war, march on conquering and to conquer, till he hath confounded or converted his enemies, and finally consummated his victories in a glorious triumph over all the powers of the earth. For the scripture not only foretells this universal conquest of his, but also describes and delineates the whole method and progress of it, which upon laying the scripture prophecies together, in their proper train and series, seems to me to be this: That the opening of this great scene of providence will be the conversion of the Jewish nation, those obstinate and hitherto implacable enemies of our Saviour, whom, notwithstanding they have been a thousand times over conquered, slaughtered, and oppressed, and do to this day con-

tinue scattered over the face of the whole earth, he hath preserved, by a strange and unparalleled providence, for above sixteen hundred years together, a distinct and separate people from all the nations of the earth, to shew his mighty power in them, and once more render them, what they have always been, the subject of his miraculous conduct. For by a wonderful effusion of his Holy Spirit upon them, such as that was on the day of Pentecost, though far more extensive [a], he will all of a sudden, and in a most surprising manner [b], open the eyes of this blinded nation, and powerfully convince them of the error and wickedness of their infidelity and malice against him; whereupon, with one heart and one mind, they shall return to the Lord, and with penitent tears wash off the guilt of the blood of their Saviour [c], which, like an heirloom, hath hitherto descended upon them from one generation to another. Thus, Rom. xi. 25, 26. *I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery—that blindness in part is happened to Israel, ἄχρις οὗ, till when the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer*, &c. From whence it is plain, that that blindness which then happened to Israel, and which continues on them to this day, shall one day be removed, viz. about that time when the conversion of the Gentiles shall be completed; and that then all Israel (and not a small remnant of them as at first) shall be saved. So also 2 Cor. iii. 14, 16. *But*

[a] Ezek. xxxix. 28, 29. Isa. xxxii. 13, 14, 15. v. 20, 21. comp. with Rom. xi. 26, 27.

[b] Isa. lxvi. 8. Zech. iii. 9.

[c] Zech. xii. 10.

their minds are blinded, (meaning the people of Israel:) *for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament: nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.* Where he first supposes that Israel, that till then was blinded, and that till now remains so, should turn unto the Lord, and then asserts, that then the vail of ignorance, which hindered them from discerning Christ in the figures and prophecies of the Old Testament, should be removed from before their eyes.

And now the Jews, being thus converted by the power of our Saviour, shall under his victorious banners be conducted into the Holy Land, and repossessed of their ancient native country[d], whither they shall be close pursued with mighty hosts of the eastern infidels, and be reduced by them into eminent danger of utter desolation; in which extremity of theirs our blessed Saviour will make *bare his almighty arm*, and in a most miraculous manner confound and scatter those mighty swarms of infidels, and crown his Israel with victory and triumph[e]. The fame of which miraculous events, spreading far and wide, even to the utmost ends of the earth, shall in a little time convince all the heathen world of the truth of Christianity, and prevail with the kingdoms of the earth to *become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*[f]. And now the kingdom of Christ in this world being arrived

[d] Jer. xxxii. 37. to 41. Ezek. xxxvi. 24, 25. xxxvii. 21, 22, 25. Amos ix. 14, 15. Isaiah xi. 11, 12.

[e] Joel iii. 1, 2, 9, 14. Mich. iv. 11, 12. Isa. xxiv. 21, 22. Zephan. iii. 8. Isa. lxiii. 1, 6. xxxiv. 1. lix. 16, 17. Zech. xiv. 13. Hag. ii. 22. Zech. xii. 2, 3. 4.

[f] Isa. lxvi. 16, 18, 19, 20. lx. 1, 6. Jer. xiv. 33. Isa. lxi. 7.

to its full extent and growth, truth and peace, charity and justice, shall reign and flourish over all the earth. Now all the world shall be Christendom, and Christendom shall be restored to its ancient purity. For now he who is to come with the *fan in his hand* will throughly purge the floor of his church from all that chaff of superstition and idolatry, schism and heresy, irreligion and immorality, with which it is almost totally covered; and the true faith, the sincere piety, the generous and unaffected virtue, which Christianity teaches and prescribes, shall be the universal livery and cognizance of the Christian world[g]. For much about the time of this conversion of the Jews, and that glorious call of the Gentiles thence ensuing, that corrupt and degenerate faction of Christians, whom the scripture calls the *mystical Babylon* and the *Antichrist*, and which for several ages hath been the great nuisance of Christendom, will in these western parts of the world muster up all its forces to destroy and extirpate the purer professors of Christianity by a general persecution[h], in which attempt, for some time, this faction will be very prevalent and successful[i]; when all of a sudden the kings and princes of the earth, who have hitherto been partakers with it in its foul impostures and corruptions, (being either awakened by those miraculous conversions of the Jews and eastern Gentiles, or convinced of their errors by the powerful impressions of his Spirit in whose hands the hearts of kings are,) will turn their

Ezek. xxxviii. 16, 21, 22, 23. Rom. xi. 12.

[g] Psal. lxxii. 7. Isa. lxvi. 12. and xxiii. 4. Micah iv. 3. Jer. xxxii. 39. Zeph. iii. 8, 9. Ezek. xix. 21, 22. Isa. ix. 7. and ii. 20. Hab. ii. 14.

[h] Revel. xiii. 7.

[i] Dan. vii. 21, 22.

swords upon this antichristian faction, whose cause they have hitherto espoused, and conspire to root it out from off the face of the earth [k], which being effected, the western church will universally reform itself according to the standard of the church of Jerusalem, which will then be, in a literal sense, *the mother of us all* [l]. Thus, partly by destroying, and partly by converting its enemies, our Saviour will yet mightily enlarge the borders of his kingdom, and advance it to the utmost pitch of purity and splendour that this state of mortality will admit; and in this happy state he will preserve and continue it for several ages [m], till a little before the commencement of the general judgment, at which time the Devil, who had been hitherto chained up, will be loosed again, to work in the children of disobedience, to excite them to delude and deceive the world again, and to persecute the sincere professors of Christianity with incessant cruelties [n], when all of a sudden, and while they are securely triumphing in the success of their villainies, they shall be surprised with the day of judgment [o], which, *like a thief in the night*, shall come upon them, and put an end to all their mischiefs for ever.

II. Another of those regal acts which he is yet to perform, is to destroy death, the last enemy, by causing a general resurrection of the dead, which being one of the great articles of our creed, I shall insist more largely upon it; and endeavour,

First, To prove the certainty of the fact; and,

[k] Revel. xvii. 16, 17.
[l] Isaiah lx. 1—5.
[m] Revel. xx. 1—5, 16.
[n] Revel. xx. 7, 8, 9.
[o] Revel. xx. 10—15.

Secondly, To explain the manner how it will be performed.

1. I shall endeavour to prove the certainty of the fact, viz. that our Saviour shall raise the dead; which is as plainly and frequently asserted in holy scripture as any proposition contained in it: for so, 2 Cor. iv. 14. we are assured, that *God will raise us up by Jesus Christ*, i. e. by his personal power and agency: and accordingly, John vi. 39, 40, 44, 54. Christ promises us, over and over again, that *he will raise us up at the last day:* and, John xi. 25. he thus declares himself to Martha, *I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:* and, John v. 28. he tells us, that *the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice.* And of the truth of this he hath given a most sure and certain pledge by his own resurrection, which not only demonstrates the possibility of the thing, that the dead may rise, but also gives ample assurance that they shall. For that he hath in him power to raise the dead is evident by his raising himself; and to be sure that power and Spirit that was in him when he raised himself is able to raise all those in whom it resides. Whoever therefore hath the Spirit of Christ, that Spirit by which he rose from the dead, hath the power of the resurrection in him; which power to be sure will not be always in vain, but one time or other will most certainly be reduced into act: for so the apostle assures us, Rom. viii. 11. *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that*

dwelleth in us. And indeed, considering that Christ, in dying and rising from the dead, acted as our head and representative, we may justly conclude, that, as when he laid down his life, he laid it down for ours, so when he took it up again, he took up ours with it; and consequently that he virtually raised us by the same Spirit whereby he actually raised himself; because he hath not only power, but also will, as he is our head and representative, to raise us even as he had raised himself. So that we are already risen in our causes, since our head and representative is risen, and hath the same power to raise us as he had to raise himself; and hence he is called *the firstborn from the dead*, and we *the sons of the resurrection*, Col. i. 18. because our resurrection is now in the same causes (that is, in the same will and power) as his was before he arose. And therefore also he is called *the firstfruits of them that rise*, that is, the pledge and handsel of the general resurrection; because he is risen with the same will and power to raise us that he had when he arose to raise himself; and hence we find the apostle argues from the resurrection of Christ to the general resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. 12. *Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you, that there is no resurrection of the dead?* If we are all agreed that Christ is risen, what reason can any man have to doubt of the general resurrection? But *if there be no resurrection from the dead, then is Christ not risen*, ver. 13. To say that we shall not rise is by consequence to deny the resurrection of Christ; because that very same will and power which must have been the cause of Christ's resurrection, if he be risen, must be

the cause of ours, if ever we rise; and therefore if it be insufficient to raise us, it could never have been sufficient to raise him, and consequently he cannot be risen. If it be objected against this reasoning of the apostle, that our resurrection will be far more difficult to accomplish than Christ's was, because his body was never corrupted, nor were the parts of it ever dispersed, as ours will be, long before the resurrection, and therefore that cause which was sufficient to raise Christ may not be sufficient to raise us; it may easily be answered, that to the infinite power by which Christ was raised all possible things are equally easy; and therefore allowing our resurrection to be but possible, it must be every whit as easy to that infinite power by which Christ was raised, to reduce all our scattered atoms into one mass again, and to reorganize them into a human body, and reunite it to its ancient soul, as it was to quicken the yet uncorrupted body of our Saviour. So that all the question is, whether the thing be possible; for if it be, it will be every whit as easy to the omnipotent cause of our Saviour's resurrection, to raise our bodies as it was to raise his. But, I beseech you, why should it be thought more impossible for God to raise a dead corrupted body, whose parts are all dispersed and scattered throughout the vast wilderness of matter, and reunite it to its primitive soul, than it was at first to create the matter of it, and then form it into a human body, and animate it with a human soul? He who at the first creation could separate the confused mass of matter into so many distinct kinds and species of beings, can doubtless, at the general resurrection, as easily separate the same matter into its distinct

and several individuals. For what should hinder him who numbers the stars of the heavens, the sands of the sea, and the hairs of our heads, from keeping an exact account of all our scattered particles, and from knowing what dust belongs to every body, and what body to every soul? Or how can it be difficult to him whose power is as immense as his knowledge, to recollect all the parts of this curious piece of clockwork which he both made and took in sunder, and to restore every pin into its proper place, every spring to its due vigour and activity, and every wheel to its primitive figure and motion? If it be farther objected, that there is an impossibility in the nature of the thing, for the same dead body after it is corrupted, and its parts all dispersed, to be reunited and raised to life again; I answer, that since these dispersed parts of our bodies do not perish, but are safely laid up in the chambers of nature, however they are scattered, or wherever lodged, they are all within the ken of God's knowledge, and within the reach of his power; and so long as they are so, why should their separation render it impossible for them to be reunited how and when he pleases. If you say, that in that perpetual course of transmutation which the matter of human bodies runs, it may happen, and sometimes doubtless it doth, that the same particles at several times are incorporated into several bodies; as for instance, when one man eats either the flesh, or that which hath the flesh or substance of another in it, and digests it into a part of his own body or substance; in which case, how is it possible at the resurrection that the substance or matter of this part should be reunited to them both? To this I answer, that considering

that scarce the hundredth part of what we eat is digested into the substance of our bodies, and that all the rest we render back again into the common mass of matter by sensible or insensible evacuations; though we should suppose one man to have eaten up the whole substance of another's body, yet he retains but one part of an hundred; and what should hinder an omnipotent power from raising the body he hath devoured out of the ninety-nine parts which he lets go again? And then considering that in seven years time the whole substance of our body changes, he must, if he live so long, evacuate that one part which he retained, and so the whole will at last be worn off from the matter and substance of his body. Nay, suppose this devourer to feed altogether upon man's flesh, as some affirm the cannibals do, and that in the last seven years before his death he devours one hundred human bodies weighing two hundred pound apiece; according to this computation, the utmost he can be supposed to digest of the flesh of these hundred bodies into the substance of his own amounts not to above two pound of each, so that of the two hundred weight of bodily substance, whereof these devoured bodies did consist, there will still remain one hundred ninety-eight undigested into the substance of the devourer; which we may easily conceive is sufficient matter out of which to reproduce the same bodies: for we many times lose as much of our substance in a sweat, and a great deal more in a consumption, as these devoured bodies do in their being eaten and digested; notwithstanding which our bodies continue numerically the same: but as for the bodies of these man-eaters, there is no doubt but

they carry with them a great deal of other substance to their graves, besides that of man's flesh; for the liquor which they drink with it, and the bread which they eat with it, and the other accidental nourishments which they receive with it, goes into the substance of their bodies as well as that; and these being at least one half of their nourishment, must constitute at least one half of their bodies. What then should hinder, but that at the resurrection the other half of them, which consists of man's flesh, may be separated from them, and restored to those human bodies they devoured; and if so, then each of them shall recover its whole substance again, and not want so much as one particle of all that matter whereof they were composed when they were eaten: for it is but just, that they should be made to refund those unnatural spoils which they barbarously ravished from the bodies of other men. But then you will say, How shall the body of the cannibal that eat them be raised, when according to this account it must be deprived of one half of the substance it died withal? I answer, that to this remaining half of his bodily substance, there may, without any repugnance to its being raised the same body, be added out of the common mass of matter as much new bodily substance as is sufficient to redintegrate it in all its parts; for the resurrection of the same body doth not necessarily imply that all the same matter shall be raised, and no other, and no more. For if all shall be raised in the most perfect stature and proportion of human bodies, as there is no doubt but they shall, then infants and dwarfs, and such as die of consumptions, must have new matter added to that which they

die withal; and therefore the resurrection of the same body can imply no more than this, that every body shall be raised out of the same matter, so far as it will go; and therefore if this remaining half of the substance of the cannibal's body will not go far enough to redintegrate his whole body at the resurrection, there is no doubt but God will add new substance to it, which will no more hinder it from being the same numerical body, than the reparation of an house with new stones and timber hinders it from being the same numerical house. For suppose that God by a miracle should in an instant restore a man to his full bulk, the substance of whose body is half pined away by a lingering consumption, this would not at all hinder but that still it would be the same numerical body. Why then should the addition of new bodily substance to the remaining half of the matter of the cannibal's body at the resurrection hinder it from being raised numerically the same?

And this, I conceive, is sufficient to clear the doctrine of the general resurrection from all pretence of repugnancy and contradiction. But suppose, after all, that there should be some rare and singular instances, wherein it will be impossible, in the nature of the thing, for the same numerical body to be raised again, this would no more impeach the truth of a general resurrection of the same bodies, than Enoch's and Eliah's not dying do the truth of the maxim of the author to the Hebrews, *It is appointed for all men once to die.* If therefore in any instance it should be impossible, in the nature of the thing, for God to raise the same body, it will be sufficient to serve the purpose of rewards and pu-

nishments for God to clothe the same soul in a new body. For it is the soul that individuates the man, and makes him to be the same person, though he hath not the same body. We have not the same matter about us when we are ten years old, that we were first clothed with when we were born: and as he who shall be rewarded or punished ten years hence, for a virtue or a crime which he acts now, will be rewarded or punished in the same body, though not in the same matter; so he who shall be rewarded or punished at the resurrection, for the good or evil which he doth in this life, will be rewarded or punished in the same person, though it should not be in the same body. But it being more congruous to the accuracy and exactness of the divine justice that it should be in the same body as well as in the same person, and it being every whit as easy to an infinite power to restore to our souls the same bodies as to clothe them in new ones, (for within the compass of possibilities all things are equally within the reach of omnipotence,) men's bodies shall be universally rebuilt at the resurrection out of those old ruins and materials in which they did good or evil in this life: and if there should happen some particular instances wherein such a numerical resurrection should be in itself impossible, these will be only a few exceptions from that general rule, which rather confirm than destroy it. For thus from scripture we are assured that *they who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake*, Dan. xii. 2. and that *all that are in the grave shall hear Christ's voice, and come forth*, John v. 28, 29. that *the sea shall give up the dead which are in it; and that death and hell*, i. e. the grave, *shall deli-*

ver up the dead which are in them, Rev. xx. 13. All which expressions, according to the literal sense of them, (from which, without necessary reasons, we ought not to depart,) do plainly import a resurrection of the same numerical bodies. Our resurrection therefore, being a possible thing, is as easy to an omnipotent power as Christ's was; and therefore his resurrection is a most certain pledge of ours; since he arose as our common head and representative, and consequently rose with the very same will and power to raise us which he had to raise himself.

Having thus proved the truth of the matter of fact, viz. that Christ will raise us at the last day, I proceed, in the next place, to the manner of the fact, how it is that he will raise us. In treating of which I shall regulate myself by that account which the apostle gives of it, 1 Cor. xv. in which he having proved at large the truth of the resurrection, from verse 12. to the 35th, he comes to answer an objection concerning the manner of it; *But some men will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?* In answer to which he gives a large description of it, and by the similitude of seed explicates the manner how it shall be performed, till he comes to ver. 42. where he applies the similitude to the matter in hand, *So also is the resurrection of the dead;* and then goes on with a farther enlargement on it to the end of the chapter. So that this *so also* refers both to what went before and to what follows: *So also;* i. e. So as I have already in part described, and shall farther explain in my ensuing discourse. This *so* therefore, referring to the whole description, implies these five particulars, of which the whole consists:

First, *So* is the mortal body to be the seed and material principle of our resurrection.

Secondly, *So* must this seed die and be corrupted, before it be quickened and revived.

Thirdly, *So* is the dead corrupted body to be raised and quickened by the power of God.

Fourthly, *So* is it to be raised by the divine power into the proper and natural form of an human body.

Fifthly, *So* is this human body to be changed and altered in its resurrection.

I. *So is the resurrection of the dead;* i. e. So is this mortal body to be the seed and material principle of the resurrection. For this is plainly implied, ver. 36. *Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die.* Intimating, that as the seed is the material cause of the ear of corn which afterwards springs up, so are these mortal bodies, which we sow in the earth, at least the main material of those immortal ones into which we shall be quickened at the resurrection. Perhaps as the seed digests and incorporates into itself the juices of the earth, and shoots them up together with its own substance into the stalk and ear; so, in some particular instances at least, there may be other matter at our resurrection interwoven with the appropriate substance of our mortal bodies, and together with it spring up into immortal ones. Yet, from the apostle's comparison, it is apparent, that this very mortal body, which we sow in the grave, shall be at least the seed and embryo which shall receive our soul at the resurrection, and by that (supposing other matter be added to it) assimilate and digest it into its own substance. Now though to reproduce the scattered particles of our dissolved flesh, and extri-

cate them out of all those other substances wherein into they have been woven and entangled, may seem to us at first view an impossible performance, yet that it is not so, I have already demonstrated. And if a parcel of quicksilver, after it hath run a tedious course of alteration, shifted itself out of its natural form into that of vapour, out of a vapour into an insipid water, out of water into a white or red or yellow powder, out of that into a salt, and thence into a malleable metal, may by a skilful artist be reduced out of all those various contextures into its natural form of plain and running mercury; why should we think it either impossible or difficult for a being of immense knowledge and power to watch the wandering particles of our corrupted bodies through all their successive alterations, and to retrieve them out of all those substances into which they shall be finally resolved; to take out of one body what belongs to another, and restore to each its own; and finally to incorporate them altogether into their natural forms and figures?

II. *So is the resurrection of the dead;* i. e. So is this seed of our mortal body to die and be corrupted before it shall be raised again; *That which thou sowest is not quickened, unless it die.* Intimating, that as the parts of the seed are separated in the ground, and dissolved into a liquid jelly, before it springs up into a stalk and ear; so this mortal body of ours must be corrupted, its parts must be dispersed and dissipated from one another, before it quickens and springs up again at the general resurrection. And indeed the body must naturally corrupt when once it is separated from the soul that enlivens it; and that, before it is raised and glorified,

the soul should remain for some space separated from it, seems highly necessary. For the nature of souls is such as requires a gradual and leisurely progression out of one state into another; their faculties are such as cannot in a natural way be improved but by degrees, or qualified in an instant for two extreme conditions without a miracle. But as for this mortal state and that of the resurrection, they are two such remote and distant extremes, as that our slow-paced natures cannot travel from one to the other under a long space of time; and for a soul to pass in one instant out of an earthly into an heavenly, out of a fleshly into a spiritual, out of a mortal into an immortal body, seems too great a leap for a being whose nature confines it to a gradual improvement. For how should a soul which hath been so long immured in mortal flesh, so long accustomed to its sensual pleasures, so clogged and encumbered with its unwieldy organs, so pinioned and hampered by its brutish appetites; how, I say, is it possible, in a natural way, for such a soul to be immediately disposed to act and animate an heavenly body? And therefore it is requisite that for some time at least it should continue in a separate state, there to inure itself to a heavenly life; and by a continued contemplation, and love, and imitation of God, to ripen gradually into the state of the resurrection; and to contract a perfect aptitude to animate an heavenly body, that so its powers being enlarged and improved by exercise, it may be able to manage that active fiery chariot, and be prepared to operate by its nimble and vigorous organs, which, till the soul is rendered more sprightly and active by long and continual exercise, will be perhaps too

swift for it to keep pace withal. It is true the apostle tells us of some souls that in an instant shall be fitted for and with these heavenly bodies, 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. *Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment:* i. e. Those good men who are living just before the resurrection shall suffer no separation of their souls from their bodies; but the beggarly vestment of their flesh, while it is upon them, shall in an instant be transformed into a glorious and immortal robe; which to be sure it would not be, unless in the same instant also their souls were made fit to wear it. But then it is to be considered that both will be miraculous; and, for ought I know, it will be as great a miracle immediately to fit an imperfect soul for a glorified body, as immediately to change a gross and corruptible body into a glorious and immortal one. And therefore, though some souls shall be immediately qualified to operate by glorified bodies without any intermediate space of separation; yet this, being extraordinary and miraculous, is only an exception from the general rule of Providence, which is, to leave things to proceed and act according to the regular course of their natures: and if souls are so left, as ordinarily to be sure they are, it is highly requisite that they should be allowed some space of separation from their mortal bodies before they are clothed with their immortal ones; and consequently, that this mortal body should be corrupted and dissolved before it is quickened and glorified.

III. *So is the resurrection of the dead;* that is, So is the dead corrupted body to be raised and quickened by the power of God; so ver. 37, 38.

That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, perhaps of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it pleaseth him. In which he plainly intimates, that as a grain of wheat sown in the ground is only the seed or material principle of the stalk and ear that spring up from it; but God is the principal efficient cause that forms the matter, and enlivens it, and causes it to spring up and ripen: so, though these mortal bodies which we sow in the grave are the seed and matter out of which our immortal one shall spring, yet it is God that must recollect this matter, reduce it into a body again, and reunite it to its ancient soul. For this is such a performance as doth require an almighty agent; it is he alone can trace our scattered atoms through all those generations and corruptions wherein they have wandered, and retrieve them out of all those other bodies whereinto they have been finally resolved. It is he alone can separate them into the several masses whereunto they originally appertained, and order, distinguish, and distribute those rude masses into their various parts, and connect and join one part to another. It is he alone that can recognise those undistinguished heaps into human bodies, and reunite them to their primitive souls. And accordingly we find that this great article of the resurrection is in scripture resolved into the power of God: for so our Saviour attributes the Sadducees' denial of the resurrection to their *not knowing the scripture, and the power of God.* Matt. xxii. 29. which plainly implies that the power of God must be the cause of the resurrection. So, 2 Cor. i. 9. St. Paul tells us, that he was brought into a great extremity, that so

he might not trust in himself, but in God, that raiseth up the dead; and, 1 Tim. vi. 13. *I charge thee,* saith he, *before God, that quickeneth all things.* And indeed to quicken our bodies when they are dead requires the same power as it did at first to create and form them. For as at their first creation they were formed out of the preexisting matter of the earth, so at the resurrection they must be reproduced out of the same matter again: and as at the creation all those distinct kinds of beings we behold lay shuffled together in one common mass, till the fruitful voice of God separated this united multitude into their distinct species; so at the resurrection, after these mortal bodies are crumbled into dust, and that dust is scattered through all that confused mass again, it is God alone whose powerful voice can command them back again in their proper shapes, and call them out again by their single individuals: so that as our first existence was only a real echo to God's omnipotent *Fiat,* so will our return into existence be to his almighty *Surge.* The scripture indeed seems to affirm that the holy angels will be employed in this great transaction, though what they are to do in it is not expressly related; only, 1 Thess. iv. 16. the apostle seems to intimate that their office will be to collect the scattered relics of our mortality; for there he tells us, that *the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God;* upon which *the dead in Christ shall rise first.* Which popular description seems to import, that as by a loud voice or a trumpet it was anciently the custom of the Jews and other nations to summon assemblies, and parti-

culiarly by a trumpet to collect and rally their armies; so at the resurrection our Saviour, by the ministry of his angels, under the conduct of their archangel, will assemble and rally our scattered atoms, and then by his divine power organize them into human bodies again, and reunite them to their proper souls. For so, Matt. xxiv. 31. Christ tells us that his angels shall with the *sound of the trumpet gather together his elect from the four winds.* Which if you compare with the above-cited text, you will find that this sound of the trumpet, by which the elect are to be gathered, is to precede their resurrection, and consequently that it is not to gather them when they are raised, but to gather them to be raised; that is, to collect their dispersed dust, which hath been blown about upon the wings of the wind, in order to their being redintegrated into human bodies, and reinformed with their primitive souls.

IV. *So is the resurrection of the dead;* i. e. So are our dead bodies to be raised again into the proper form and kind of human bodies: and this is implied in ver. 38. *But God giveth it a body as it pleaseth him, and unto every seed his own body:* i. e. As to the seed of wheat, which dies in the winter, God gives in the spring the body, or stalk, and ear of wheat; so to this mortal body, which we sow in the grave, God will give at the resurrection its own proper and specific form. For the soul will have the same faculties at the resurrection that it hath now in this mortal state; and the body is only in order to the soul, its parts and members being all purposely contrived into fit instruments for the soul to work withal. These inward faculties therefore

continuing still and for ever the same, it is highly requisite that at the resurrection they should be refitted with the same corporeal instruments of action: for the soul is the same to the body, what the art is to the thing that is formed by the art: and therefore as the thing formed is not perfect, so long as it is any way disproportionable to the art which formed it; so neither can the body be perfect, till in all its parts it is every way apportioned unto the faculties of the soul. And how can the matter of this corrupted body be readapted to the natural faculties of a human soul, unless it be raised again into an human body, and restored to its primitive figure and proportion? For should it be raised with more or fewer parts than those it now consists of, it must either be defective or superfluous in its parts, or the soul must have more or fewer faculties to employ them. It is true, after the resurrection, the scripture plainly tells us, that our souls shall no longer exercise those their animal faculties of nourishing and propagating; that *the sons of the resurrection shall neither marry nor be given in marriage, but that they shall be equal to the angels of God*, Matt. xxii. 30. And indeed since every individual man will then be raised into an immortal state, there will be no need either that they should be nourished themselves, or that they should propagate any more individuals to preserve their kind. But it doth not hence follow, either that the soul shall be deprived of those animal faculties, or, consequently, that the body shall be raised without the organs by which those animal operations are performed. For though our Saviour's body, after the resurrection, had no need of nourishment; yet it is

plain it was raised again with its natural instruments of eating and drinking which he once actually used, to assure his disciples of the reality of his resurrection. And though now those parts are useless to him, as to that particular animal operation, yet there is no doubt but his soul still uses them for other unknown purposes peculiar to his glorified state; or if he do not, yet since those parts were necessary to the perfection of a human body, and consequently to the redintegration of his human nature, it was requisite he should be raised with them, that so he might have corporeal organs adapted to his animal faculties, which it is plain were not extinguished by his resurrection: and since the resurrection of our Saviour's body is in scripture represented as the pattern of ours, (for *he shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body*, Phil. iii. 21.) we may hence warrantably conclude, that ours shall be raised as his was, complete in all the parts of an human body.

V. And lastly, *So is the resurrection of the dead*; i. e. So are these human bodies to be changed and altered by the resurrection: so ver. 37. *That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain.* Intimating, that as the seed when it is sown is nothing but bare seed, though when it is quickened it springs up into a long stalk and ear, which many times contains in it an hundred grains; even so this mortal body, which is only the naked seed of our resurrection, shall be very much altered from what it is, and changed into a more complete and perfect substance. For the more clear and distinct explication of which, we will first consider the change that will then be made in the

bodies of good men; and secondly, the change that will be made in the bodies of the wicked.

First, We will consider the change that will then be made in the bodies of good men; which consists of four particulars:

First, They will be changed from base and humble into glorious bodies.

Secondly, From earthly and fleshly into spiritual and heavenly bodies.

Thirdly, From weak and passive into active and powerful bodies.

Fourthly, From mortal and corruptible into immortal and incorruptible bodies.

1. The bodies of good men will be changed from base and humble into bright and glorious ones; so ver. 43. *It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory.* That is, When it is sown in the grave, it is a base and abject thing, not to be endured above ground for its ghastly looks and nauseous stink and putrefaction; but at its resurrection it shall come forth in a bright and beautiful and venerable form. For so our Saviour assures us, that after their resurrection *the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father*, Matt. xiii. 43. that is, the matter of their bodies shall be refined and exalted into a bright and lucid substance, which shall glitter like the sun, and cast forth rays of glory round about them: and this, perhaps, is *that inheritance of the saints in light*, that is, embodied in light, which the apostle speaks of, Col. i. 12. For when this dull matter comes to be reanimated with a blessed and glorified soul, it will doubtless derive from it a great deal of beauty and lustre. For if now the soul, when it is overjoyed, can so trans-

figure our bodies, fill our eyes with such sprightly flames, overspread our countenance with such an amiable air, and paint our faces with such a serene and florid aspect, what a change will it make in our resurrection-body, which, being incomparably more fine and subtil than this, will be far more pliable to the motions of the soul! When, therefore, the happy soul shall reenter this softened and liquefied matter, ravished with unspeakable joy and content, how will its delightsome emotions change and transfigure it! how will its active joys shine through and overspread it with an amiable glory! especially when with this natural energy of its glorified soul our Saviour himself shall cooperate to *change this vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.* Though now therefore the matter of our bodies is vile and sordid, and such as seems altogether incapable of such a glorious change; yet, according to the best philosophy, there is no specific difference in matter: and if the vilest and most ignoble matter may by mere motion not only be crystallized, but transformed into a flaming brightness, as we are sure it may; if in lighting of a candle that is newly blown out, by applying another to the ascending smoke, this dark and stinking substance may in the twinkling of an eye be changed into a bright and glorious flame; into what a refulgent substance may the matter of this mortal body be changed, by the concurrence of an infinite power with the vigorous activity of a glorious soul!

2. The bodies of good men will be changed from earthly and fleshly into spiritual and heavenly. So

ver. 44. *It is sown*, saith he, *a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body;* where those words, σῶμα ψυχικὸν, which we render *a natural body*, may perhaps be better translated an *animal body;* i. e. a body suited and adapted to this animal life, which the beasts that perish enjoy in common with us; a body that is sustained by animal operations, and recreated with animal pleasures, and which, by reason of its gross substance, doth continually crave to be supplied with suitable nourishment, and treated with gross and carnal pleasures, which is the very thing that renders it so great a cumber to the immortal spirit that animates it. But at the resurrection it will be improved into a spiritual body; not that it will be converted into a spiritual substance; for the apostle's own words do assure us that it will still remain a body; but the spirituality of it will consist in this, that, being wrought into a purer and finer substance, it will no longer need or crave these animal nourishments and pleasures, but be perfectly fitted for and contempered to the soul, and entirely resigned to its use and service; for it will then be refined from all those animal appetites of eating, drinking, and carnality, which do now too often not only render it unserviceable to the soul, but also hurtful and injurious: so that then it will be in entire subjection to the mind, and all its members will be devoted instruments to the service of righteousness; so that now there will be no longer any law in its members to wage war against the law in the mind, but the mind will govern, and the body obey without any contest or reluctancy. And as the body will be wholly obedient to the mind, so it will be perfectly adapted to its service: for whereas now, by reason of its gross consistency, it is an unwieldy

luggage to the soul, and doth very much clog and encumber her in her operations; it will then be wrought into so fine and tenuous a substance, as that, instead of a clog, it will be a wing to the soul. For its consistence will be subtil as the finest ether, and active as the purest flame; it will have nothing that is gross or burdensome in it to retard or weary it in its flights, to rebate its vigour or slacken its motion; but it will be all life, and spirit, and wing, and, like a perpetual motion, be carried on with unwearied swiftness by its own internal springs; and being freed from all that weight which now renders it so slow and heavy, it will be able to move like a thought, and to keep pace with the most nimble wishes of the soul: so that what Hierocles saith of his spiritual body, ὃ τῇ νοηρᾷ τελειότητι τῆς ψυχῆς συνάπτηται, i. e. that it is such a body as is every way fitted to the intellectual perfections of the soul, will be true of this resurrection-body, which will be perfectly attempered to a perfect mind, and fashioned into a most convenient organ for it, whereby to exert its purest and most spiritual operations.

3. The bodies of good men will be changed from weak and passive into active and powerful bodies; so ver. 43. *It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power:* that is, Whereas the body which we sow in the grave is exceeding weak and infirm, liable to infinite passions and diseases, and can do but little, but suffer much; it shall be raised with a temperament so pure and just, so hale and vigorous, that no disease or infirmity shall ever find any place in it, or be able to cramp it in its operations: for, besides that its elementary qualities (if any such remain in it) shall be turned into such an exquisite temper, that they shall never jar or disagree with each other,

it shall be so spirited and invigorated by the blessed soul that animates it, that nothing shall be able to impair its health or discompose its harmony. So that it shall live for ever without decay, move for ever without weariness, fast for ever without hunger, and wake for ever without any need or desire of refreshment. And indeed, considering for what purpose our bodies shall be raised, they have need to be very strong and vigorous: for they shall be raised on purpose to be the organs and instruments of the operations of our glorified souls, which being exceeding active as they are spirits, but exceedingly more active as they are glorified spirits, will require bodies suitably strong and vigorous, such as can support their joys, express their activities, and keep pace with their rapturous emotions; to do which, will require a mighty firmness and vigour of temper. Since therefore at the resurrection God will fit and adapt our bodies to the utmost activity of our glorified spirits, they must necessarily be supposed to be endued with unspeakable strength and agility; upon which account they are called by the ancient Hebrews, eagles' wings, upon which they suppose our glorified souls shall be able to fly as fast and as far as they please. And this I am apt to think is intimated in that passage of St. Paul, 1 Thess. iv. 17. *And they that are alive*, and whose bodies are changed in the state of the resurrection, *shall be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air*; the meaning of which is, not that they shall be snatched up from the earth by any external cause or agent, but that their bodies being changed into pure ethereal flame, they shall, of their own accords, ascend in them, as in so many

fiery chariots, to the throne of their Redeemer in the clouds; and from thence, when the judgment is concluded, shall as nimbly ascend with him through all those spacious fields of air and ether that lie between that and the eternal paradise of blessedness. For that they shall be caught up by angels, as some imagine, I see no reason to think; since our Saviour himself assures us, that at the resurrection they shall be ἰσάγγελοι, and therefore shall not need their help in this angelified state, either to waft them up into the air, or from thence into the heaven of heavens: and if by their own activity they shall be able to perform so vast a flight as it is from the earth into the uppermost region of the air, and from thence into the supreme region of everlasting glory, we may from thence collect what a vast power they will be endued with at their resurrection. But this is most certain, that then they shall be perfectly released from all dolorous passion, and continue in perfect strength and health and vigour for ever. So that whereas now our bodies are exceeding weak and passive, a kind of walking hospitals of pains, infirmities, and diseases; the time will come when our soul shall be accommodated with a much more easy and convenient as well as glorious habitation, wherein it shall for ever forget those dismal cries, O my head, my heart, my bowels, and enjoy everlasting rest and freedom. Now she is in a travelling condition, and the inn she lodges at is mean and inconvenient, her provision is coarse, her bed hard, and her rest continually interrupted with noise and tumult: but when she is once got home to her own house, her *house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*, she shall there live in perfect ease

and pleasure, free from all the annoyances of flesh and blood, from all the disturbances of pain and sickness, and from all the toil and fatigue, the noise and hurry of this mortal condition, and with splendid state, delicious fare, soft and quiet repose, recompense herself a thousand-fold for all her present travail and weariness.

4. And lastly, The bodies of good men will be changed from corruptible and mortal into incorruptible and immortal. So ver. 42, 53. *It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; and this corruptible must put on incorruption, this mortal must put on immortality:* i. e. Whereas this body which we lay down hath, in the very constitution of it, the seeds of mortality and corruption, at the resurrection it shall spring up into an incorruptible and immortal substance, perfectly refined from all mortal and corruptible principles. For so our Saviour pronounces of those who shall be accounted worthy to attain to his blessed resurrection, that *they cannot die any more*, Luke xx. 36. which is a plain argument, that our mortal body shall not be merely varnished and gilded over with an external glory and beauty, but that all inward principles of corruption shall be utterly purged out of its nature, so that it shall not be preserved immortal merely by the force of an external cause, but be so far immortal in itself, as not to have any tendency to death in its nature and constitution. For either it will be so liquid, that should its parts be separated by any external violence, like the divided ether, they will immediately close again, or else so firm and compact, that no external violence will be able to divide them: and thus having no alloy of corrupt principles in its na-

ture, no quarrels or discords between contrary qualities, and being perpetually acted by a most happy, sprightly, and vivacious soul, which will every moment diffuse a vast plenty of life and vigour throughout all its parts, it will be also secure from all inward tendencies to mortality; and being thus fortified both within and without against all attempts towards a dissolution, what should hinder it from living for ever, and flourishing in immortal youth? And thus I have endeavoured to give an account of the happy changes which good men's bodies will undergo in the general resurrection.

But though they shall all of them be raised with unspeakable advantages and improvements, yet it is apparent from this, 1 Cor. xv. that they shall vastly differ in the degrees of their glory. So ver. 41. *There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another in glory: so also is the resurrection of the dead:* i. e. As the sun is more glorious than the moon, the moon than the stars, and one star than another, so shall our bodies at the resurrection be arrayed with different degrees of glory; and doubtless these differences of glory in our raised bodies will arise from those different degrees of perfection to which their respective souls have arrived; for the more perfect those souls are, the more improved and accomplished bodies they will require, because, according as they rise in degrees of perfection, their powers will be enlarged, and their faculties rendered more active, and consequently will require bodies more active and powerful. And therefore since at the resurrection God will accommodate every soul with a body suitable

to it in its utmost exaltations and improvements, we may reasonably conclude, that the several bodies that are raised shall be more or less glorious, as the several souls to which they appertain are more or less advanced in degrees of perfection. For the fitness and congruity of souls to glorified bodies consists in their mortal perfection; and if, upon an impossible supposition, a wicked soul should be mistaken for a pious one, and thrust into a glorified body, it would not know what to do with, or how to behave itself in it, but, like a swine in a palace, would soon be weary of its habitation, and impatiently long to be restored to its beloved sty and mire. For a glorified body is an instrument proper only for a glorified soul to act and work with: it is purposely framed and composed for contemplation and love, for joy and praise and adoration; and what should a vicious soul do with such a body, to whom those heavenly exercises it was designed for are unnatural? It is piety and virtue that fits and disposeth a soul to animate and act in a glorified body; and therefore I am apt to think, that as the animal disposition of our soul doth now cooperate with the divine Providence in the forming its animal body into the womb, so that divine and spiritual disposition which the soul doth contract before and improve after its separation from the body, will cooperate with the almighty power of our Saviour in the forming its new body at the resurrection: and that as by the animal plastic power of our souls God did first form our animal bodies, so by this spiritual plastic power of it, which is nothing but its moral perfection, he will hereafter form our spiritual bodies; and if so, then the more of that perfection

the soul arrives to at the resurrection, the more it will spiritualize and glorify its body; and so still the more perfect it grows, the more it will improve its glorified body in beauty, lustre, and activity. So that as through a transparent glass we plainly discern the size and colour of the substance contained in it; so perhaps through the still increasing degrees of the body's glory, the degree and size of the soul's perfection will appear. But whether this be true or no, which I confess is only my conjecture, thus much is certain, that the bodies of men will be raised with different degrees of glory; and therefore, since we are assured that the great end of the last judgment will be to distribute to every one according to his works, we have sufficient reason to conclude, that the bodies will be glorified more or less in proportion to the perfection of their souls.

And thus I have endeavoured to give a brief account of those happy changes which good men's bodies must undergo at the resurrection. I proceed therefore in the next place to shew the woful change that will then also be made in the bodies of wicked men; in which I shall be very brief, because we have but a very short and general account of it in scripture, where we are only told, that they shall *awake to everlasting shame and contempt*, Dan. xii. 2. and that they *shall come forth to the resurrection of damnation*, John v. 29. and that upon their resurrection they shall *be judged according to their works*, and *cast into the lake of fire*, Rev. xxiii. 13, 15. From whence it is apparent, that they shall be raised for no other end but to be punished, to endure the vengeance which shall then be rendered to them, even the vengeance of *eternal fire;* for that

will be their doom, *Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels.* Since therefore their resurrection will be only in order to their being fetched from prison to judgment, and sent from judgment to execution; to be sure their bodies will be raised in full capacity to suffer the fearful execution of their doom; that is, with an exquisite sense to feel, and an invisible strength to sustain the torment of eternal fire. For since they must suffer for ever, they must be raised both passive and immortal, with a sense as quick as lightning to perceive their misery, and yet as durable as an anvil to undergo the strokes of it, which to all eternity will be repeated upon them without any pause or intermission. Thus shall they be raised with a most vivacious and everlasting sense of pain, that so they may ever feel the pangs of death without ever dying. So St. Cyril, Catech. Illum. iv. p. 26. *Οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ αἰώνια λαμβάνουσι σώματα, ἵνα εἰς αἰῶνας τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων ὑπομείνωσι τὴν βάσανον*; i. e. "Wicked men "shall be clothed with eternal bodies, that in them "they may suffer the eternal punishment of their "sins;" and so they shall have strength to suffer as long as vengeance hath will to inflict. And therefore since it is the will of divine vengeance that they should suffer eternal fire, the divine power will furnish them with such bodies as shall be able to endure everlasting scorching in that fire without being ever consumed by it. For at their resurrection their wretched ghosts shall be fetched out of those invisible prisons, wherein they are now *reserved in chains against the judgment of the great day,* to suffer in that body wherein they sinned; and that therein they may be capable of lingering out an

eternity of torment, they shall be reunited to it in such a fatal and indissoluble bond, as neither death nor hell shall ever be able to unloose. And this is all the account we have from scripture concerning the change that shall be made by the resurrection in the bodies of wicked men, viz. that from weak and corruptible bodies they shall be changed into vigorous and incorruptible ones, and be endued with a quick and everlasting sense of all that everlasting punishment which they are raised to endure.

Thus having given an account at large of this second regal act, which our blessed Saviour is yet to perform, viz. raising the dead; I proceed to the

III. And last, viz. his judging the world. In treating of which great and fundamental article of our faith, I shall endeavour,

First, To prove the truth of the thing, that our blessed Saviour shall judge the world.

Secondly, To give an account of the signs and forerunners of his coming to judge it.

Thirdly, To shew the manner of his coming.

Fourthly, To explain the whole process of his judgment.

I. I shall endeavour to prove the truth of the thing, viz. that our Saviour shall judge the world, than which there is no one proposition more frequently and plainly asserted in holy scripture. Thus Acts xvii. 31. we are told, that *God hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by the man whom he hath ordained.* And that this man is Jesus Christ we are assured, Acts x. 42. *And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and*

dead. So also 2 Tim. iv. 1. *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.* And accordingly we are told, that *we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ,* Rom. xiv. 10. and *all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad,* 2 Cor. v. 10. And to the same purpose our Saviour himself tells us, that *the Father judgeth no man,* that is, immediately, *but hath given all judgment to his Son;* and afterward he gives the reason of it, *because he is the Son of man,* John v. 22, 27. that is, because he dutifully complied with his Father's will, in cheerfully condescending to clothe himself in human nature, and therein to offer up himself a willing victim for the sins of the world: for so Rev. v. 9. 12. *Worthy is he alone to receive the book,* (of judgment,) *and to open the seals thereof; because he was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his blood. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive the power and honour, the glory and blessing* appendant to his high office of judging the world. From all which it abundantly appears, that this great action of judging the world is to be performed by Christ. I proceed therefore to the

Second general head I proposed to treat of, which was to give an account of the signs and forerunners of his coming to judgment. For before he actually appears, he will give the secure world a fearful warning of his coming, by hanging out to its public view a great many horrible signs and spectacles. For thus the prophet Joel, Joel ii. 30, 31. *I will shew*

wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord: which prophecy of his is particularly exemplified by our Saviour; *Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken, and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven,* Matth. xxiv. 29, 30. And more particularly, Luke xxi. 11, 25, 27. *Great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven: and there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with great perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring:* and then it follows, *then shall they see the Son of man coming.* It is true, this prophecy of our Saviour immediately respects the destruction of Jerusalem, and was in part accomplished in it; several of these very signs being a little before the calamity of that city actually exhibited to the public view of the world, as both Josephus and Tacitus assure us; and several others of them were exhibited immediately after the tribulation of those days, in that prodigious eruption of the Vesuvius in Campania, the woful effects whereof were felt not only in Rome and Italy, but in a great part of Africa, in Syria, Constantinople, and in all the adjoining countries, vid. Dion Cass. lib. 66. 68. But it is apparent, that our Saviour here prophesies of the judgment of Jerusalem, as it was a type and representation of the general judgment. So that

though his prophecy respects Jerusalem's doom immediately, yet through this it looks forward to the final doom of the world: and therefore, as in foretelling the former he prefigures the latter; so in foretelling the foregoing signs of the former he prefigures the foregoing signs of the latter. And since he here intended the signs of Jerusalem's doom's day only for types and figures of those signs which shall forerun the doom's day of the world, and seeing that types have always less in them than are in the things which they typify and prefigure, there is no doubt but those signs which shall forerun the last judgment, will be much more eminent and illustrious than those of Jerusalem's judgment, which were intended only to typify and prefigure them. And accordingly St. Jerom tells us of an ancient tradition of the Jewish doctors, (to which our Saviour in this prediction seems plainly to refer,) that for fifteen days together, before the general judgment, there shall be transacted upon the stage of nature a continued scene of fearful signs and wonders: the sea shall swell to a prodigious height, and make a fearful noise with its tumbling waves; the heavens shall crack day and night with loud and roaring thunders; the earth shall groan under hideous convulsions, and be shaken with quotidian earthquakes; the moon shall shed forth purple streams of discoloured light; the sun shall be clothed in a dismal darkness; and the stars shall shrink in their light, and twinkle like expiring candles in the socket; the air shall blaze with portentous comets, and the whole frame of nature, like a funeral room, shall be all hung round with mourning and with ensigns of horror: and when these fatal symptoms ap-

pear upon the face of the universe, then shall the inhabitants of the earth mourn, and the sinners in Sion shall be horribly afraid, being loudly forewarned by these astonishing portents of the near approach of their everlasting doom. Having thus briefly shewn what shall be the signs of our Saviour's coming to judgment, I shall proceed to

III. The third general, which was to shew the manner and circumstances of his coming. And here we will first consider the place from whence he is to come: secondly, the state in which he is to come: thirdly, the carriage on which he is to come: fourthly, the equipage with which he is to come: fifthly, the place to which he is to come.

1. The place from which he is to come, which is no other than the highest heavens, where he now lives and reigns in his exalted and glorified humanity; for *him must the heavens receive till the time of the restitution of all things,* Acts iii. 21. In that bright region of eternal day, that kingdom of angels and of *spirits of just men made perfect,* he is to reign in person till the last and terrible day, and from thence he is to begin his circuit, when he comes to keep his general assizes upon earth; for he is to be *revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,* 2 Thess. i. 7. and to *descend from heaven with a shout,* 1 Thess. iv. 16. So that in the close of those dreadful alarms which he will give the world by the preceding signs of his coming, he will arise from his imperial seat at his Father's right hand, and descend in person from those high habitations of inaccessible light, *and every eye shall see him* as he comes shooting like a star from his orb, and the sight of him shall affect the whole world with un-

speakable joy or consternation. The righteous, when they see him, shall lift up their heads and rejoice, because they know he is their friend, and brings the day of their redemption with him; they shall congratulate his arrival, and welcome him from heaven with songs of triumph and deliverance. But as for the wicked, they shall shriek and lament at the sight of him, as being conscious to themselves that by a thousand provocations they have rendered him their implacable enemy; the sense of which will cause them to exclaim in the bitter agonies of their souls; "O yonder comes he whose mercies we have spurned, whose authority we have despised, whose laws we have trampled on, and all the methods of whose love we have utterly baffled and defeated; and now, forlorn and miserable that we are, how shall we abide his appearance, or whither shall we flee from his presence? O that some rock would fall upon us, or that some mountain would be so pitiful as to swallow us up, and bury us from his sight for ever. But, woe are we! within these few moments the rocks and mountains will be gone, the heavens and earth will melt away, and nothing will be left besides ourselves for his fiery indignation to prey on." Thus shall the sight of the Son of man, descending from his throne in the heavens to judge the world, inspire his friends with unspeakable joy, and strike his enemies with terror and confusion.

2. We will consider the state in which he is to come, which shall be far different from that in which he came sixteen hundred years ago. Then he came in an humble and despicable condition, clouded with poverty and grief, and oppressed with all the inno-

cent infirmities of human nature. But at the last day he shall come in his glorified state, clothed in that celestial body which he now wears at the right hand of God: for so, Acts i. 11. the angel assures his disciples, *This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven;* that is, he shall return to judgment in that selfsame glorified body wherein you now see him ascend. And what a glorious one that is we may partly learn from that majestic description of it, Rev. i. 13—16. *In the midst of the seven candlesticks was one like the Son of man; his head and his hair were white as wool, as white as snow, his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his countenance was as the sun shining in its strength.* And partly from his transfiguration on the mount, which was but a short essay and specimen of his glorification; for it is said, that *his face did shine as the sun,* and that *his raiment was white as the light,* white with those beams of glory, which from his transfigured body shone through all his apparel, Matth. xvii. 2. When therefore he descends from heaven to judge the world, it shall be with this glorified body, this body of pure and immaculate splendour, with its hair shining like threads of light, its eyes sparkling with beams of majesty, and its face displaying a most beautiful lustre, and its whole substance shedding forth from every part a dazzling glory round about it: and this I conceive is that which he himself calls *his own glory,* Luke ix. 26. *When he* (i. e. the Son of man) *shall come in his own glory;* that is, the glory of that illustrious heavenly body wherein he is now arrayed. Besides which bright and luminous robe, in which, like a

meridian sun, he shall visibly shine over all the world, the aforecited text tells us, that he shall also come *in the glory of his Father;* by which I conceive is meant that which the Hebrews call the *schechinah,* and the scripture *the glory of the Lord,* viz. a body of bright shining fire, in which the Lord was especially present, and with which, as the Psalmist expresseth it, *he covered himself as with a garment,* Psalm civ. 2. for in 2 Thess. i. 7, 8. we are told, that *he shall be revealed from heaven with flaming fire:* and so he descended on the mount *in fire,* Exod. xix. 18. and that fire is called *the glory of the Lord,* Exod. xxiv. 17. That fire therefore in which our Saviour shall *be revealed from heaven* seems to be of the same nature with that fiery *schechinah,* or visible glory of the Lord, in which he descended on mount Sinai, though doubtless it will be far more glorious, as being designed to adorn a far more glorious solemnity. And this glory being added to the natural brightness and splendour of his glorified body, will cause him to outshine the sun, and drown all the lights of heaven in the conquering brightness of his appearance. So that when he comes forth from his ethereal palace, and appears upon the eastern heaven, that immense sphere of visible glory which will then surround him will in the twinkling of an eye spread and diffuse itself over all the creation, and cause both the heavens and the earth to glitter like a flaming fire.

3. Thirdly, we will consider the carriage on which he is to come, which, as the scripture tells us, shall be *a cloud.* So, Acts i. 11. the angels tell his disciples, who stood gazing after him as he was ascending into heaven, *This same Jesus, which is*

taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. Now, if you would know how that was, the ninth verse will inform you, where it is said, that *he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of sight:* and therefore as he ascended into heaven on a cloud, so *in like manner* he shall from thence descend upon a cloud also. And accordingly our Saviour himself declares, that *we shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven in power and great glory,* Matt. xxiv. 30. So also, Matt. xxvi. 64. *Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.* And in this very manner do the Jews expect the coming of their Messias, as appears by that gloss of one of their ancient masters on Dan. vii. 10. *Si meruerint Judæi veniet in nubibus cœli;* which Raimund. Pug. Fid. thus explains: "If ever the "Jews deserve that the Messias should come, he "shall come gloriously, according to the prophet "Daniel; that is, *in the clouds of heaven.*" And then he tells us farther, *Ideo moderni Judæi dicunt Messiam non venisse, quia non viderunt eum venire in nubibus cœli;* "Therefore do the modern "Jews say, that the Messias is not yet come, because "they never saw him *coming in the clouds of hea-* "*ven.*" And it seems very probable that the great offence which the high priest took at our Saviour's saying, that *they should hereafter see him coming in the clouds of heaven,* Matt. xxvi. 64, 65. was this, that it was a tradition among them, that the Messias should so come; and that therefore he looked upon that saying of our Saviour as a blasphemous pretence to his being the Messias; as much as if he

should have said, Though I have done enough already to convince you that I am the Messias, yet you shall hereafter see that very sign of my being the Messias, upon which you so much depend, and without which you will not believe, viz. *my coming in the clouds of heaven;* which therefore I am apt to think is *the sign of the Son of man in heaven*, of which our Saviour speaks, Matt. xxiv. 30. For so not only the Jews do character their Messias, but also the heathens their gods, clothed in a cloud. Thus Homer, Iliad. lib. v. represents God coming to Diomedes, νεφέλῃ εἰλυμένος ὤμους, "with his shoulders "wrapped in a cloud;" and so also Virgil represents Jupiter coming to assist Æneas, Æn. vii. ——*Radiis ardentem lucis et auro Ipse manu quatiens ostendit ab æthere nubem;* i. e. "shewing him a cloud from "heaven, flaming with rays of light and gold." So that to appear in clouds, it seems, was looked upon both by Jews and Gentiles as a divine sign and character: and accordingly this sign was given by our Saviour to the Jews, in that glorious representation of a captain with his legions issuing out of the clouds a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, recorded at large both in Josephus and Tacitus, and will hereafter be given to the whole world in a far more glorious manner, at the opening of the day of judgment; for then, as the Psalmist expresses it, he will *make the clouds his chariot*, and ride down from the heavens on them in a triumphal procession, shining with unspeakable glory and majesty. So that as when he ascended, a bright and radiant cloud was prepared to receive and carry him up to the seat of the blessed; so when he descends, there will be a vast sheet of condensed ether in the form of a ra-

diant cloud (and such it is probable was that on which he ascended) prepared to receive him, and to waft him down from above, to the place appointed for the general assizes. And this very cloud, or bright ethereal substance, on which he shall come, will perhaps be that *throne of glory*, in Matt. xxv. 31. on which he shall sit, whilst he is administering judgment to the world: for this substance being not only naturally luminous, but also accidentally illuminated from the Sun of righteousness whom it bears, will, to be sure, be sufficiently glorious to deserve the name of *a throne of glory*.

4. Fourthly, we will consider the retinue and equipage with which he shall come, which, as the scripture tells us, will consist of innumerable myriads of saints and angels. For immediately upon the notice that he is going down to solemnize the general judgment, all those blessed *spirits of just men made perfect*, whom he hath redeemed and glorified from the beginning of the world, shall forsake their mansions of glory to attend him in his progress: for so *Enoch prophesied of old, Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment on the ungodly*, Jude 14, 15. And that by these *ten thousand* he means the whole body of the church triumphant, is evident by that passage of St. Paul, 1 Thess. iii. 13. where he prays, that they might be established in their Christian course *till the coming of the Lord Jesus with all his saints*. And indeed, since they are all to reassume their bodies, and to be made partakers of the glorious resurrection, it is necessary that they should all come down along with him and return to this earth, where the old matter of those bodies lies,

wherein they are to be reinvested. And to this illustrious retinue of glorified saints shall be joined the heavenly hosts of the holy angels; for so Christ himself tells us, *that he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of his holy angels*, Luke ix. 26. and that *he shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him*, Matt. xxv. 31. And St. Paul tells us, that he shall *be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels*, 2 Thess. i. 7. And as the angels shall come down along with him, so in all probability they shall come in a glorious appearance, clothed in bright ethereal bodies, in which, to adorn the triumphs of that glorious day, they shall be conspicuous to all the inhabitants of the earth. Neither shall their coming with him be only for show and pomp; but the scripture plainly tells us, that they shall minister to him in that great transaction. For at his issuing forth from the heaven of heavens, these mighty hosts of angels shall march before him, with the archangel in the head of them, who, with a mighty voice or sound, like that of a trumpet, shall send forth an awakening summons to all the inhabitants of the grave to come forth and appear before the judgment seat. At which tremendous voice, which with an all enlivening power shall be reverberated through all the vault of heaven, and penetrate the most secret repositories of the earth, the dead shall rise, and the living shall be changed and transfigured, and all shall be set before the dread tribunal to undergo their trial and receive their doom: for so, 1 Thess. iv. 16. *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise*

first. And in 1 Cor. xv. 52. the resurrection of the dead is made the consequence of the sounding this trumpet, *for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible.* And so also, Matt. xxiv. 31. our Saviour tells us, that at his coming on the clouds of heaven he will *send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds.* From whence it is evident, that the angels then minister to him in raising the dead, and assembling them to judgment; and hence that which is called *the voice of the archangel* in the above-cited 1 Thess. iv. 16. is elsewhere called *the voice of the Son of God,* John v. 25. Because as it will be animated by his power, so it will be pronounced by his authority; and as they shall minister to him in raising the dead to be judged, so shall they also in executing his sentence and judgment: for so, Matt. xiii. 41, 42. he tells us, *the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.* From whence it is evident, that when he hath pronounced sentence on the *workers of iniquity,* he will, by the ministry of his angels, chase them into that everlasting fire, whereunto he hath doomed and devoted them. Thus when he comes to judge the world, all his holy angels shall come with him, and that not only to contribute to the glory and splendour of his circuit, but also to minister to him in his judgment: so that his retinue shall consist of all the inhabitants of heaven, who shall all come forth together with him, and bear him company in this his triumphant progress through

the skies. By which we may easily imagine what an amazing spectacle his coming down from heaven will be to the inhabitants of the earth, when they shall see him descend from his imperial seat, far above the starry skies, with all the train-bands of heaven about him, the captain of the angelical host in the front of innumerable angels marching before him, and with his mighty trump ringing a peal of thunder through the universe, and with ten thousand thousands of the *spirits of just men made perfect*, following after him with crowns of glory on their heads, and songs and hallelujahs in their mouths; O blessed Jesu! how will this glorious and dreadful sight confound thy enemies, and ravish thy friends, make those that hate thee tremble and gnash their teeth, and those that love thee lift up their heads and shout for joy!

5. And lastly, we will consider the place to which he is to come; concerning which, all that is certain from scripture is this, that when he comes down from heaven, he will fix his throne, or judgment seat, in the air, at such a convenient distance from the earth as shall render him visible to all its inhabitants. For so, 1 Thess. iv. 17. it is said of the righteous, that after their being raised or changed, they shall be *caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air;* which is a plain argument that the Lord will sit in judgment on them in the air, since thither they will be caught up to him after they are raised and judged. Thus in that very air, which is now the seat of the Devil's empire, shall Christ fix his throne, to manifest to all the world the consummation of his victory over the powers of darkness. There shall he sit in majesty and glory,

where now the Devil and his angels reign, and in the public view of the world shall even in their own dominion *spoil those* hellish *principalities and powers*, and having chained them at his chariot-wheels, *make a show of them openly, triumphing over them:* there, where they now domineer and tyrannize over this wretched world, shall he set his foot upon their necks, and from thence shall he tread them down into everlasting darkness and despair. Thus, that he may expose himself to the more public view, and the Devil to the more public shame and confusion, he will choose to keep his general assizes in the air. Being therefore arrived into the airy regions, after a long and glorious progress from the highest heaven, there he shall sit down upon the *throne of his glory*, (as some think) over against mount Olivet, the place from whence he ascended, whither all people, nations, and languages shall be gathered before him to receive their everlasting doom. And now let us imagine with ourselves in what a glorious and tremendous majesty he will appear to the world from his judgment seat, whence every eye shall see him shine in his own, his Father's, and his angels' glory, who in a bright corona shall sit round about him like so many stars about a sun; and where, as the prophet Daniel describes him, chap. vii. verse 9, 10. he shall exhibit himself to public view, clothed in *garments as white as snow, with the hair of his head like the pure wool, sitting on a throne like the fiery flame, and its wheels as burning fire, with a fiery stream issuing out from before him, and thousand thousands ministering unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him, whilst the*

judgment is set, and the books are opened. And thus I have given a brief account from scripture of the manner and circumstances of his coming: from whence I proceed to the

IV. And last general I proposed to treat of, viz. to explain the whole process of this judgment. And that we may proceed herein the more distinctly, we will consider it with respect to those twofold objects; viz. the righteous and the wicked, about which it is to be exercised. For it is plain from scripture, that they are not to be judged promiscuously one among another as they come, but the sheep are to be separated from the goats, the good from the bad, and to be tried and sentenced apart from one another. Matt. xxv. 32, 33. *And he,* i. e. the Son of man, *shall separate them from one another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on the left.* In which separation the precedency will be given to the sheep, or righteous, who are to be judged first: for so the scripture assures us, that *the dead in Christ are to rise first,* and that after they have undergone their judgment, they are immediately to be wafted up into the air, there to meet the Lord, and to sit as assessors with him in that judgment which he shall afterwards pass upon the wicked, (vide 1 Thess. iv. 15, 16, 17. compared with 1 Cor. vi. 2.) In explaining therefore the process of this judgment, we will treat of it in the same order wherein it will be transacted, beginning first with the judgment of the righteous; in which, according to the scripture account of it, there are these five things implied: 1. Their citation or summons. 2. Their personal appearance before the

judgment seat. 3. Their trial. 4. Their sentence. 5. Their assumption into the clouds of heaven.

1. This judgment of the righteous includes their citation or summons, which, as was observed before, is to be performed by the voice or trump of the archangel; i. e. by an audible shout or noise made by the prince of angels, and sounding throughout the universe, like the mighty blast of a trumpet. For as it was anciently the manner of nations to gather their assemblies by the sound of a trumpet; so by the same sound, the scripture tells us, God will assemble the world of men to judgment. And that this shall be a real audible sound like that of a trumpet, though proceeding from no other instrument than that of the archangel's mouth, I see no reason to doubt; because with such a noise we read God did descend upon mount Sinai, Exod. xix. 16. And why may we not as well understand the one in a literal sense as the other, it being no more improper in the nature of the thing for God to proclaim by such a sound his coming to judge the world, than it was, his coming to give laws to Israel. But then, together with this mighty voice or trump of the archangel, there shall proceed from Christ a divine power, even his holy Spirit, by which he raised himself from the dead, by whose omnipotent agency all those holy relics of the bodies of his saints, which are now scattered about the world, shall be gathered up, reunited, and reorganized into glorious bodies: for so the apostle attributes the resurrection of our bodies to the Holy Ghost, Rom. viii. 11. *For if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in us, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies*

by his Spirit that dwelleth in us: and the old materials of their bodies being thus reunited and reformed by the powerful energy of the Holy Ghost accompanying the sound of the archangel's trump, those saintly spirits, which anciently inhabited them, and which are now come down from heaven with their Saviour, shall every one re-enter its own proper body, and animate it with immortal vigour and activity; and whilst the dead saints are thus arising, those who shall then be living, and have not tasted death, shall by the same almighty power be changed, transformed, and glorified *in the twinkling of an eye*, 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. which being transacted, they shall all be gathered together, by the ministry of the holy angels, from all parts of the earth, before the judgment seat of Christ, Matt. xiii. 27. For,

2. This judgment of the righteous doth also include their personal appearance before the judgment seat. What this judgment seat will be, hath been briefly hinted before, viz. a vast body of luminous ether, condensed into the form of a bright and radiant cloud, and placed in the region of the air, at a convenient distance from the earth, streaming with light from every part, and casting forth an unspeakable glory; for which cause it is called the *throne of his glory*, and is described by St. John to be a *great white*, or refulgent, *throne*, Rev. xx. 11. out of which *lightnings* and *thunders* are said to proceed, Rev. iv. 5. which implies, that it will be a cloud, it being from clouds that thunders and lightnings do proceed. And before this glorious tribunal, or bright judgment seat, shall all the assembly of the righteous appear, to undergo a merciful trial, and receive a happy doom. Here shall the glorious

company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, the noble army of martyrs, the holy church throughout all the world, both militant and triumphant, meet, and in one entire body present themselves before their blessed Redeemer; who, looking down from his exalted throne, shall at one view see all the congregation of his saints before him, and with infinite complacency survey the fruit of the travail of his soul, and the mighty purchase of his precious blood; for so the apostle tells us, that *we must all stand before his judgment seat,* Rom. xiv. 10.

3. This judgment of the righteous doth also include their trial: for so the apostle assures us, *We must all appear* (i. e. we righteous as well as others) *before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body,* 2 Cor. v. 10. which plainly implies, that even the righteous shall undergo an impartial trial of their deeds, that so they may receive a reward proportionable to them; and more expressly, Rom. xiv. 12. he tells us, that *we must every one of us give an account of himself to God.* And if every one, then to be sure the righteous must as well as the wicked: not that there will be any doubt of the righteousness of the righteous in the breast of the Judge, to whose all-seeing eye the darkest secrets of all hearts lie open; but yet for other reasons it is highly convenient they should undergo a trial as well as others. As, first, for the more solemn and public vindication of their wronged innocence, that all that infamy and scandal with which their malicious enemies have bespattered them may be wiped off before men and angels; and that being assoiled before all

the world; they may triumph for ever in a bright and glorious reputation. And secondly, that all those brave and unaffected acts of secret piety and charity, to which none but God and themselves were conscious, may be brought into the open light, and, to their everlasting renown, proclaimed throughout all the vast assembly of spirits: for then we shall see all those modest souls unmasked, whose silent and retired graces do make so little show and noise in the world; and all their humble pieties and bashful beauties, which scarce any eye ever saw but God's, shall be exposed to the public view and general applause of saints and angels. Thirdly, they shall be tried also for the vindication of God's impartial procedure in proportioning their reward to their virtue; that so the degrees of each man's proficiency in piety and virtue being exposed to the view of the world by an impartial trial, angels and men may be convinced, that in distributing the different degrees of happiness the Almighty Judge is no way biassed by a fond partiality or respect of persons; but that he proceeds upon immutable principles of justice, and doth exactly adjust and balance his rewards with the degrees and numbers of our deserts and improvements; that so even those that are set lowest in those blessed forms and classes of glorious spirits may not envy those that are above them, or complain that they are advanced no higher; but every one may cheerfully acknowledge himself to be placed where he ought to be, as being fully convinced that he is only so many degrees inferior to others in glory, as they are superior to him in divine graces and perfections. Fourthly and lastly, the righteous shall undergo this trial for the more glorious mani-

festation of the divine mercy and goodness: for which reason I am apt to think that even their sins, of which they have dearly and heartily repented, shall in this their trial be exposed and brought upon the stage; that so in the free pardon of such an infinite number of them, the whole congregation of the blessed may behold and admire the infinite extent of the divine mercies, and be thereby the deeper affected with, and more vigorously excited to celebrate with songs of praise, the goodness of their merciful Judge. For these reasons the wise man tells us, Eccles. xii. 14. that *God shall bring every secret thing to judgment, whether it be good, or whether it be evil;* which proposition, being universal, must extend to the righteous as well as to the wicked. But yet though their sores shall be then laid open, it shall be done by a soft and gentle hand, by a serene conscience, and a smiling Judge, who, without any angry look, or severe reflection, or any other circumstance but what shall contribute to the joys and triumphs of that day, shall read over all the items of their guilt, and then cancel them for ever. For,

4. This judgment of the righteous doth also include their sentence. Although to us, whose operations are so slow and leisurely, by reason of the unwieldiness of these fleshly organs with which we act, such a particular trial as hath been before described of such an infinite number of men and women may seem to require an unreasonable length of time, yet if we consider that then both the Judge, and those who are to be judged, shall be arrayed in spiritual bodies, in which they will be able to act with unspeakable nimbleness and despatch, we shall

find that a little time comparatively may very well suffice for so great a transaction: for the Judge being one that can attend to infinite causes at once without any distraction, and they who are to be judged being, by reason of their spirituality, in a condition to attend to every one's trial while they are undergoing their own, I see no reason we have to imagine, that they shall be tried successively one after another; and if not, why may we not suppose, that we shall all be tried together at the same time, and consequently that the trial of all may be transacted in as short a time as the trial of one. And that they shall all be tried together is very probable, since it is apparent from scripture, that they shall all be sentenced together, for thus Matt. xxv. 34. *Then shall the King say to those on his right hand,* i. e. to them all together, *Come, ye blessed,* &c. Having first by an accurate and impartial trial manifested their integrity to all the world, he shall arise out of his flaming throne, and, with an audible voice and smiling majesty, pronounce their sentence all together in these or such like words; *Come, ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world:* to which welcome sentence they will doubtless all immediately resound a joyful choir of hallelujahs through heaven and earth; *Allelujah, salvation, and glory, and power be to the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his judgments; salvation be unto our Lord that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb; for wonderful are thy works, O Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, O thou King of saints.* And now all their business being finished here below, they shall from

henceforth be no longer detained in this vale of tears and misery, but with overjoyed hearts shall take their leave of it for ever. For,

5. And lastly, another thing implied in this their judgment, is their assumption into the clouds of heaven. For their blessed Lord having thus publicly acquitted and pronounced them blessed, they shall immediately feel the happy effect of it; for now he will no longer suffer them to stand below at the bar, but from thence will call them up to his tribunal, there to give them a nearer access to his beloved person, and more intimate participation of his glory. At which powerful call and invitation of his, they shall in an instant all take wing together, like a mighty flock of pure and innocent doves, and fly aloft into the air, singing and warbling as they go to meet their Redeemer in the clouds of heaven. For so the apostle, in 1 Thess. iv. 17. *Then* (that is, after their resurrection and judgment) *we which are alive and remain*, who never died, but only have been changed and glorified, *shall be caught up together with them*, who shall be raised from the dead, *into the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall be ever with the Lord.* For to be sure that rapturous love which the sight and sentence of their Saviour hath by this time kindled in their pious breasts will wing their souls with vehement desire to be with him, and then being clothed with glorified bodies, that are as vigorous and active as their souls, as nimble and expedite as their thoughts and wishes, it will be in their power soon to accomplish their desire, and fly from hence up to the throne of their Lord.

And now this being the first general meeting of

the blessed Jesus and his church, the first interview that ever was between the heavenly Bridegroom and his holy bride; O the dear welcomes, the infinite mutual congratulations that will pass between them! How will they now melt in love and dissolve in mutual flames! now when, like long absent lovers, they are safe arrived into each other's arms, never, never to be parted more.

And now this joyful meeting being consummated, they begin to prepare for a most dreadful solemnity, and that is the judgment of the wicked. In order to which the Judge will reassume his throne, and place his saints all round about in shining circles, ten thousand thousand together, that so, as his assessors, they may bear a part in the ensuing judgment: for this the apostle asserts as a notorious principle of our Christian faith; *Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?* 1 Cor. vi. 2. that is, that they shall not only accuse and condemn the wicked world by the holy example of their lives, but also that they shall give their votes and suffrages to that dreadful sentence which Christ shall pass upon them. And now the Judge and his assessors being set, proceed we to the

II. Second judgment, which is that of the wicked; in which there are also five particulars included: first, their citation; secondly, their personal appearance; thirdly, their trial; fourthly, their sentence; fifthly, their execution.

1. Their citation: for the first judgment being finished, it is probable a new summons will be given by the voice or trump of the archangel to assemble the wicked world to their judgment. Upon hearing of which, all those wicked souls that have left their

bodies, and been hitherto confined in some dark prison of the creation, shall be forced to leave their dismal habitations, in which they would a thousand times rather choose to continue for ever, if they might have their own option, than to undergo that fearful judgment whereunto they are cited; but being dragged into the open light again by those devils who have been hitherto their jailors, they shall every one be forced to put on those old accursed bodies of theirs in which they contracted those crimson guilts, which now they must expiate in eternal flames. And now the souls of the dead being shut up in their bodies again, like prisoners in a sure hold, and there secured by an immortal tie from ever making another escape, the bodies of the living shall by a miraculous change be rendered at once so tender and sensible, that the least touch of misery shall pain them, and yet so strong and durable, that the greatest loads of misery shall never be able to sink them: and thus being all of them put into an immortal capacity of suffering, and thereby prepared to undergo the fearful doom which awaits them, they shall from all parts of the world be driven before the judgment seat of Christ. For,

2. This judgment of the wicked implies also their personal appearance at our Saviour's tribunal: for so St. John, in his prophetic vision of the day of judgment, *saw the dead, both small and great, standing before God*, Rev. xx. 12. and in Matt. xxv. 31, 32. we are told, that *when the Son of man sits down upon the throne of his glory, all nations shall be gathered before him;* that is, the impure goats as well as the innocent sheep, as he afterwards explains himself. And now, good Lord, what a tra-

gical spectacle will here be! An innumerable number of self-condemned wretches assembled together before the tribunal of an almighty and implacable Judge, quaking and trembling under the dire expectations of a fearful and irrevocable doom, and with weeping eyes, pale looks, and ghastly countenances, aboding the miserable fate that attends them. For thus it is represented, Rev. i. 7. *Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him; they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him:* and well they may, considering how they treated him, and what little reason they have upon that account to expect any favour at his hands; for to be sure the sight of him must give a dreadful alarm to their consciences, and suggest to them the sad remembrance of the innumerable provocations they have given him. Look up, O ye miserable creatures! see yonder is that glorious Person whose authority you have so insolently affronted, whose name you have so impiously blasphemed, whose mercies you have so obstinately rejected; behold with what a stern and terrible majesty he sits upon yonder flaming throne, from whence he is now just ready to exact of ye a dreadful account for all your past rebellions against him. But, O unhappy and forlorn! see how they droop and hang their heads, as being both ashamed and afraid to look their terrible Judge in the face, whose incensed eye sparkles upon them with such an insufferable terror and indignation as they are no longer able to endure, but are forced, in the bitterest anguish and despair that ever human souls were seized with, to *cry out to the rocks and mountains to fall upon them, and to hide them from the face*

of him that sits upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, Rev. vi. 16.

3. Another particular implied in this judgment of the wicked is their trial; for so, 1 Cor. iv. 5. we are told, that in this fearful day of reckoning *God will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the very counsels of the heart.* And this will be no hard matter to effect, considering that he who is to be the Judge of these guilty criminals hath been a constant witness to all their actions, that his all-seeing eye hath traced them all along through all their secret mysteries and dark intrigues of iniquity, and hath kept an exact record of them in the book of his remembrance; so that to convict them of their guilts he will need do no more but only produce his own registers, and expose what he hath there recorded to the view of the world: and there the wretches will see themselves transcribed, and all their abominable actions exactly copied from their first originals; there they will find all their secret machinations, their dark cheats, their lewd imaginations and hypocritical intentions, recorded in the most legible characters; and perceiving themselves thus shamefully unstripped and uncased before the world, their very inwards dissected, and the smallest threads and fibres of their hearts laid open and exposed to the view of men and angels, their own shame and intolerable rack of their consciences will force them to confess their charge, and proclaim themselves guilty before all that vast congregation of spirits. But O the inexpressible horror and confusion these wretched souls will then be seized with, when they shall see themselves thus publicly unmasked, and turned inside outwards, and

be forced to stand forth like so many loathsome spectacles before God and his angels, without any excuse or retreat for their shame, without any veil to hide their infamy and blushes! when their filthy practices shall be no longer confined to the talk of a town or a village, but be proclaimed in the hearing of all the rational world. O now it would be happy for them, if, as formerly, they could drown the retorts of their conscience in noise and laughter, and forget its cutting repartees, which were always uneasy to bear, but impossible to answer. But, alas! those jolly days are gone, and now, in despite of themselves, they must listen with horror and confusion of face to what those two great judges, Jesus and their own consciences, unanimously give in charge against them. Thus he, whose piercing eye doth now penetrate their hearts, and ransack every corner of their souls, will in that great day of discoveries bring forth all that secret filth that is there reposited, and expose it for an infamous spectacle to the public view of men and angels.

4. Another particular implied in this judgment of wicked men is their sentence. Their trial being now over, in which their guilt hath been sufficiently evinced and detected, to their everlasting infamy and reproach, they will by this time have received the sentence of death within themselves, and stand condemned in the judgment of all the world. The righteous Judge, who is too great to be overawed, too just to be bribed, and too much provoked to be entreated, whose ears are now for ever stopped, and whose bowels are impenetrably hardened against all further overtures of mercy, will with a stern look and terrible voice pronounce that dreadful doom

upon them, *Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;* which though it be of a horrible import, will appear so just, considering the horrible things which have been charged and proved against them, that it will be immediately seconded with the unanimous suffrage of all that bright corona of glorified saints that sit as assessors round the throne, who with one consent will all cry out together, *Just and righteous art thou, O Judge of the world, in all thy ways.* But O the fearful shrieks and lamentations that will then be heard from those poor condemned creatures! For if a *Lord have mercy upon thee*, a *Take him, jailor*, from an earthly judge, be able to extort so many sighs and tears from a hardened malefactor, what will a *Go ye cursed* do from the mouth of the righteous Judge of the world, and when so many millions of men and women shall be all involved together in the same doom, and all at once lamenting their dismal fate? Lord, what a horrible outcry will they make! Now in the bitter agonies of their souls they will cry to heaven for mercy, mercy: but alas! poor souls, they cry too late; their Judge was once as importunate with them to have mercy upon themselves: but *because when he called, they refused; when he stretched forth his hands, they regarded not; now when they call, he will not answer; when they cry, he will not hear, but will laugh at their calamity, as they did at his counsel, and mock when their fear and destruction is come upon them.*

5. And lastly, Another particular implied in this judgment of the wicked is the execution of their sentence. For immediately after their sentence is passed, by which they stand doomed to everlasting

fire, an everlasting fire shall be kindled round about them, a fire which within a few moments shall spread itself over all this lower world, and convert the whole atmosphere about us into a furnace of inquenchable flames. For then all those fiery particles which are everywhere intermingled with these terrestrial bodies, and have hitherto been kept within their proper limits, shall be disentangled and set free from those more gross and sluggish ones that now bind and fix them, and swarm together like so many sparks into one huge globe of fire, which from the lowermost centre of the earth shall spire up and kindle upon all that airy heaven above, and with one continued flame fill all the vast *expansum*; all that fiery matter which is now dispersed up and down within the entrails of the earth shall by degrees gather together into rivers of fire, which, rolling to and fro within, to force their way into the open air, will perhaps produce those prodigious earthquakes of which our Saviour speaks, by which at length the earth being cleft and torn, it shall everywhere vomit out torrents of fire from its flaming bowels; and at the same time the sea shall boil and swell, and roar like water in a seething pot, till it is all evaporated by the struggling flames from below, which, having rarefied its waters into vapours, shall kindle those vapours into flames; and at the same time also the heavens above shall groan and crack with incessant thunder, accompanied with thick and fearful flashes of lightning, which, joining with those vast streams of fire that will be continually issuing out of the earth and sea, will make such a prodigious deluge of flames, as will quickly overflow the whole world. For thus we are assured from scrip-

ture, that *the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up*, 2 Pet. iii. 10. So also St. John, in his vision of the day of judgment, Rev. xx. 11. *I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them.* Not that the matter of them shall be annihilated, but the form of them shall be destroyed by their being converted into an everlasting fire; and in this fire shall those condemned wretches live and suffer to eternal ages. Hence it is called *the vengeance of eternal fire;* and we are told, that it will be *in flaming fire* that the Lord Jesus will *render vengeance to all that know not God, and obey not his gospel*, 2 Thess. i. 8. And that this flaming fire shall be the conflagration of the world, that of St. Peter seems plainly to imply, 2 Pet. iii. 7. *But the heavens and the earth, which are now,—are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men;* and being reserved unto fire against the day of perdition of ungodly men, we may justly conclude that the fire it is reserved to will be the perdition of ungodly men. Thus, upon our Saviour's pronouncing those dreadful words, *Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire*, the persons concerned will immediately perceive the dire effects; for all on a sudden they will see the clouds from above, and the earth from beneath, casting forth torrents of fire upon them, which in an instant will set all the world in a blaze about their ears: at the sight of which all this wretched world will be turned into a mournful stage of horrors, in which the miserable actors, being seized with inexpressible

amazement to see themselves all on a sudden encompassed on every side with flames, will raise a hideous roar and outcry; millions of burning men and women shrieking together; and their noise shall mingle with the archangel's trumpet, with the thunders of the dying and groaning heaven, and the crack of the dissolving world, that is sinking into eternal ruins. In which miserable state of things, whither can the poor creatures fly, or where can they hope to find a sanctuary? If they go up to the tops of the mountains, there they are but more openly exposed to the dreadful lightnings of heaven; if they go down into the holes and caverns of the rocks, there they will be swallowed up in the burning furnaces of the earth; if they descend into the deep, there they will be soon overtaken with a storm of fire and brimstone; and wherever they go, the vengeance of God will still pursue them with its everlasting burnings. And thus having no retreat left them, no avenue to escape out of this burning world, here they must remain for ever surrounded with smoke, and fire, and darkness, and wrapped in fierce and merciless flames, which, like a shirt of burning pitch, will stick close to, and pierce through and through their passive bodies, and for ever prey upon, but never consume them.

And now the almighty Judge having seen his dread sentence executed, will arise from his throne, and from thence return to the seat of the blessed, in a solemn and glorious triumph, with all his holy myriads of angels and saints, who, as they follow him through the air and ether, will, with loud hosannahs and triumphant acclamations, celebrate the praises of their Redeemer. Thus shall *the ransomed*

of the Lord return with him with songs to the heavenly Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads, and everlasting praises in their mouths. For being arrived into those blissful regions, there, in those glorified bodies which they put on at their resurrection, they shall live for ever in unspeakable pleasures and delights, and be entertained, not only with all that happiness which they enjoyed in the state of their separation, when they were only blessed spirits, but also with all the satisfaction and delights that their glorified bodies can require and enjoy. So that now their blessedness shall be consummate, and all the capacities of their human nature, compounded of body and soul, shall be fulfilled with bliss, till they overflow, and can contain no more. But wherein the happiness of their glorified bodies shall consist, I shall not presume to inquire, the scripture being silent concerning it. And what the happiness of their souls shall be hath been shewn at large before, vol. i. part 1. chap. 3, 4. So that as to that state of eternal life, in which our Saviour shall place his faithful servants in the conclusion of this great judgment, I need say no more of it in this place.

SECT. XII.

Concerning the conclusion and surrender of the kingdom of Christ.

WHEN our Saviour hath finished that last and most glorious act of royalty, viz. judging the world, and hath finally condemned to everlasting fire the irreclaimable enemies of God, and crowned all his faithful subjects with eternal glory and beatitude, the apostle tells us, *he shall deliver up the king-*

dom to God, even the Father, 1 Cor. xv. 24. For our better understanding of which we are to consider that the kingdom of Christ is twofold: first, essential, as he is God essential, and doth subsist in the divine essence; by the supereminent perfections of which he being exalted above all things, hath an essential right of dominion over all things; and this is coeternal with himself, and is as inseparable to him as his being; this he can no more deliver up than he can his godhead, which, without ceasing to be, can never cease to be supreme over all things. But then, in the second place, there is his mediatorial kingdom, which is that of which we have hitherto been treating; and this, as hath been shewn before, was by solemn compact and agreement conferred upon him by the Father, upon condition that he should assume our nature, and therein make expiation for our sins; in consideration whereof the Father obliged himself to grant a covenant of grace to the sinful world, and to constitute him the mediator of it; by which mediatorial office he is authorized to rule for God according to the tenor of that gracious covenant, as well as to intercede for us; and in ruling for God according to that covenant, he is to crown and reward all such as return to and persevere in their duty with everlasting happiness, and to render eternal vengeance to all such as obstinately persist in their rebellion. So that when this is done, (as it will be in the conclusion of the day of judgment,) the whole business of his mediatorial kingdom is at an end; then the covenant, of which he is now mediator, will be completely executed, and consequently his mediation will cease, as being of no farther use, and having no farther part

to act. For now God and man being made completely one, the office of a mediator ceases of its own accord; for *a mediator is not a mediator of one*, Gal. iii. 20. and therefore the two parties being perfectly united, there is no farther use of a mediator between them. Wherefore as our beatific vision will supersede the necessity of his prophetic office to teach and instruct us, as our perfection and entire fruition will supersede the necessity of his priestly office to offer and intercede for us, so the security of our possession of both will supersede the necessity of his kingly office to protect and defend us; and therefore, when our affairs are once reduced to this happy issue, his kingly office, as well as all other parts of his mediatorship, will for ever cease. But since this great mystery is nowhere expressly delivered in scripture, but only in that fore-cited 1 Cor. xv. I shall endeavour to give a brief account of the whole passage, which lies in ver. 24—28. *Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and all power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him which did put all things under him, that God may be all in all.* The whole sense and meaning of which passage I shall cast into these propositions:

First, That the kingdom or dominion here spoken of was committed to him by God the Father.

Secondly, That he is to possess this kingdom and dominion so long and no longer, as till all things are actually subdued to him.

Thirdly, That during his possession of it he is subject to the Father.

Fourthly, That after his delivering it up to the Father, he will be otherwise subject to him than he is now.

Fifthly, That he being thus subjected to the Father, all power and dominion shall from thenceforth be immediately exercised by the Deity.

I. That the kingdom or dominion here spoken of was committed to him by God the Father; and this is expressly affirmed, ver. 27. *For he* (i. e. the Father) *hath put all things under his feet;* which words are a quotation of Psalm viii. 6. *Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:* which words are to be understood literally of the first Adam, but mystically of the second; as is evident not only because it is here applied to Christ by St. Paul, but also by the author to the Hebrews, Heb. ii. 7, 8. where he expressly tells us, that it was God the Father that *crowned Christ with glory and honour, and that did set him over the works of his hands, and put all things in subjection under his feet;* and accordingly our Saviour himself declares, that *all power in heaven and earth was given him,* i. e. by the Father, and that it was *the Father that committed all judgment to him;* and the apostle expressly tells us, that it was *God that exalted him with his own right hand to be a Prince*

and a Saviour, Acts v. 31. From all which it is evident, that the dominion which the apostle here treats of is not the essential dominion of Christ, which, as he is God essential, is coeternal without him; but that mediatorial dominion which was committed to him by the voluntary disposal of his Father, and which once he had not, and will hereafter cease to have.

II. That he is to possess this kingdom or dominion so long as, and no longer than till all things are actually subdued unto him. So, ver. 24. you see the time of his *delivering up this kingdom* is then, *when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power*; i. e. till he shall have converted and destroyed all those powers of the earth that oppose themselves against him; for so ver. 25, 26. *For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.* Which plainly implies, that when he hath conquered all enemies, and destroyed death, which is the last enemy, by giving a glorious resurrection to his faithful subjects, then, and not till then, his mediatorial reign is to conclude: for so, Psalm cx. 1. to which the apostle here refers, the Psalmist brings in Jehovah the Father, thus bespeaking Jehovah the Son, *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.* Now to *sit at the right hand of God*, whenever it is applied to our Saviour, doth in scripture always denote his possessing and exercising this his mediatorial kingdom; so that the meaning of the Psalmist is this; The Father hath commissioned his Son to continue the exercise of his mediatorial dominion, till such time as either

by the dint of his almighty vengeance he hath trampled all his enemies under foot, or by the power of his grace reduced them voluntarily to prostrate themselves before him. And indeed the end for which this kingdom of our Saviour was erected, was to subdue the rebellious world to God, and either to captivate men into a free submission to his heavenly will, which is its first intention, or, if they will not yield, to make them the triumph of his everlasting vengeance; which end at the day of judgment will be fully accomplished: for then the fate of all the rational world will be fixed and determined; then the faithful subjects will be crowned, and the incorrigible rebels condemned and executed; and so, one way or the other, *all things will be subdued unto him.* So that from henceforth the end and reason of this his mediatorial dominion will cease; and when the end of it ceaseth, he, who never doth any thing in vain, will immediately deliver it up into those hands from whence he received it. *For when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power*, i. e. conquered and subdued all that resisted and opposed him, *then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father*, 1 Cor. xv. 24.

III. That during his possession of this kingdom he is subject to the Father. So ver. 27. *But when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he* (i. e. the Father) *is excepted, which did put all things under him.* As if he should say, Do not mistake me; for when I say *all things* are put under him, my meaning is, all things except God the Father, for it was he that did put all things under him; and it is manifest that he who gave

him this superiority over all things must himself be superior to him; and indeed, considering Christ as mediatorial king, he is no more than his Father's viceroy, and doth only act by deputation from him, and rule and govern for him; and hence the Father styles him his king, Psalm ii. 6. *Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.* So that now he is subject to the Father in the capacity of a vice-king to a supreme sovereign, and whatsoever he doth in this capacity he doth in his Father's name and by his authority; for he mediates, as for men with God, in doing which he is our advocate; so for God with men, in doing which he is our king. God's part is to govern us, and our part is to sue to him for favour and protection; and both these parts our Saviour acts as mediator between God and us: he acts our part for us in being advocate, and God's part for him in being king. So that in that rule and government which he now exercises over us, he is only the supreme minister of his Father's power and dominion; and as the Father reigns by his ministry, so he reigns by the Father's authority. But though now, while his mediatorial kingdom doth continue, he is subject to the Father in the administration of it, yet, from this passage of St. Paul, it is evident,

IV. That when he hath delivered it up to the Father, he will be otherwise subject to him than he is now; for so, ver. 28. *And when all things shall be subdued unto him,* that is, actually, and as they will be at the day of judgment, when the good are crowned, and the wicked consigned to that fearful execution, *then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that did put all things under him;*

which necessarily implies, that then he should enter into a different state of subjection to the Father from that wherein he was before. Why *then shall the Son himself be subject to him?* Was he not subject to him before? Yes, doubtless he was; and therefore either this *then* must be impertinent, or then he shall be so subject to him as he was not before. Before he was subject to him as he was his mediatorial king or viceroy, as he reigned under him and by his authority; but then he is to be subject to him after a different manner: for the explication of which it is to be considered, that now the Son, considered as mediator, reigns under God in the right of what he did and suffered in his human nature hypostatically united to his godhead; for it was because *he humbled himself, and became obedient to the death, even the death of the cross, that God highly exalted him,* Phil. ii. 8, 9. Now it was as he was man that *he became obedient to death;* and it was in the right of that obedience that God exalted him to his mediatorial kingdom; so that now as mediator he not only reigns in his human nature, but in right of the passion of his human nature: his mediatorial kingdom is the purchase of his blood, by which he both obtained the new covenant for us, and regal power to execute it upon us. When therefore he hath executed it to the full, (as we are sure he will do at the day of judgment,) this regal power of his, which he purchased with his blood, will cease, as having fully accomplished that for which it was given and intended. And now he being to reign no longer in right of the sufferings of his human nature, his human nature will be subject to the Father in a more

different manner than it was before. Before it was subject to him as authorized in consideration of its passion to reign and govern under him; but then, having delivered up its reign and government, it will be subject to him in a more private capacity, as the presidents of the Roman empire were subject to Cæsar while they governed under him, but when they rendered back their character, they became his subjects in a more private station. Not that the humanity of Christ shall be any way depressed or degraded by his delivering up his mediatorial kingdom; but as an ambassador, after he is discharged of the burden of his embassy, doth still retain the honour and dignity of it, so the human nature of Christ, after he hath surrendered up its mediatorial dominion, shall still remain as highly exalted in honour, dignity, and beatitude as ever; and angels and saints shall for ever render to it the same religious respect and veneration as they did before he surrendered it: for it shall still remain hypostatically united to his godhead, and so God shall for ever reign in it, though it shall not for ever reign with God. So that it being still the temple of the Deity, and all the glorious achievements it made during its humiliation and mediatorial reign reflecting still the same honour and praise and glory upon it, it will to eternity be as great and glorious throughout all the heavenly world, as ever it was in the full splendour of its kingdom: so that in this respect what the ancient fathers added to the Nicene creed is most true, *his kingdom shall have no end;* because, without possessing it, he shall for ever enjoy the glory and honour and beatitude of it.

V. And lastly, That the Son being thus subjected

to the Father, all power and dominion shall from thenceforth be immediately exercised by the Deity; that is to say, by God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; for so ver. 28. *Then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that did put all things under him, that God may be all in all.* Where the variation of the person is very observable: for it is not said, that the Son shall be subject to him that did put all things under him, (i. e. the Father,) that *he* may be all in all, but that *God* may be all in all; that is, the triune Godhead subsisting in three Persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: for had he meant the Father only, he ought, according to the common rules of speech, to have said *he*, or *the Father*, of whom he had been before speaking, instead of *God*. Nor can it be reasonably supposed, that after the resignation of the mediatorial kingdom, the Father only shall act and reign, and the Son and Holy Ghost sit still for ever and do nothing. But the meaning is, that this mediatorial kingdom ceasing, in which the Son as man as well as God now reigns, there shall from thenceforth be no other kingdom or dominion exercised in that celestial state, but what is essential to the Godhead, in which the Son and Holy Ghost, subsisting together with the Father, shall for ever reign together with him. For this I take to be the meaning of that phrase, *that God may be all in all;* that is, that he may rule and govern all things immediately by himself; that his immediate will may reign alone in all, and be the proximate guide of all that blessed world; that there may be no mediate or mediatorial government between him and us, to exact our obedience, and convey to us his favours and re-

wards, but that we may render all our duty immediately to him, and derive all our happiness immediately from him; so that as now Christ the *Theanthropos*, or *God-man, is all in all*, Col. iii. 11. because the Father doth all things and governs all things by him, having *given him all power in heaven and earth;* so when this economy ceases, God alone, or the triune Godhead, shall be all in all, because he shall do all things and govern all things by himself immediately. Thus, when *the Son of man* is subjected to him that did put all things under him, that one divine essence, whence all things did proceed, and in which the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost subsist, shall from thenceforth resume all rule and dominion to itself, and only the Son of God together with the Father and the Holy Ghost shall reign. But yet in this purely divine government there is no doubt but those divine Persons will still continue to act in subordination to each other, according to that natural subordination in which they are placed by their personal properties: for the Godhead being communicated from the Father to the Son, the Father, in the order of nature, must necessarily be prior to the Son; and the same Godhead being communicated to the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, both Father and Son must also, in order of nature, be prior to the Holy Ghost: so that between these sacred three there is an internal necessary subordination that can never be altered or inverted; and therefore there is no doubt, but that, as they will always be subordinate, so they will always act subordinately. The Father as the first, the begetter and the fountain of divinity, will be always first and supreme in the divine monarchy; the Son, as begotten by him, will still

reign in subordination to him; and the Holy Ghost, as proceeding from both, will continue to reign in subordination to both. Thus to everlasting ages only the Trinity in Unity shall reign, and by its own immediate will and influence rule and bless all that heavenly world over which it spreads its almighty wings, and so it shall be all in all.

SECT. XIII.

Of the reason and wisdom of this method of God's governing sinful men by his own eternal Son in our nature.

THOUGH we are not, either by our natural reason or revelation, to fathom the depth of the divine wisdom, or to trace out all the reasons of its methods and conduct, yet upon diligent inquiry we can plainly discern the tracts of an admirable wisdom in all the stated methods of Providence; and though we cannot say, that this or that is the main or only reason why God doth so or so, (for infinite wisdom may have infinitely greater and infinitely more reasons of its actions than our shortsighted reason can at present discover,) yet, by comparing one action of his with another, and diligently observing the drift and tendency of them all, how they concur to one common end, and subserve each other to promote and accomplish it, we cannot avoid discovering reason enough in them to convince and satisfy us, that they all proceed from a most wise and intelligent agent, and this more especially in the admirable economy of the mediation, viz. the eternal Son of God's assuming our nature, and therein becoming our Prophet, Priest, and King: for what reasons there are why he should assume our nature, therein

to be our Prophet and our Priest, hath been shewn before. And now we shall proceed, so far as our short inquiries will reach, to shew what admirable reason there is why he should be our King also, to rule and govern us in the same assumed nature wherein he is our Prophet and our Priest; of which, according to the best light that revelation affords us, there are these five reasons assignable:

First, That he might govern us in a way more accommodated to this degenerate state of our natures.

Secondly, That he might the more effectually cure and prevent the spreading contagion of idolatry.

Thirdly, That he might the more powerfully encourage our obedience.

Fourthly, That he might oblige us to himself with a stronger tie of gratitude and ingenuity.

Fifthly, That he might give us the more ample assurance of our future reward.

I. God governs us by his own eternal Son in our natures, the better to accommodate his government to this our degenerate state, which renders us extremely unfit to be governed immediately by God. It is true, whilst man continued in his primitive innocence and perfection, he was in a condition fit to converse with God face to face, and to live under his immediate dominion; for then his sense being under the conduct of his reason, and all his brutal affections entirely subjected to the government and directions of his superior faculties, he was as much ruled and influenced by the objects of his reason, as he is now by those of his sense, and was as powerfully moved and affected by what he only knew and believed, as he is now by what he sees and feels; so

that then God, that great invisible Spirit, who is removed from all the perceptions of bodily sense, and is only perceivable by our reason and faith, did as powerfully impress man's hopes and fears, and all the other principles of action in him, as he could have done, had he appeared as amiable and dreadful to the man's sight and feeling, as he then did to his faith and reason. In this state and condition therefore man was duly qualified to be governed immediately by God, to receive his impressions, and to be moved and acted by the overruling influence of his immense perfections. But when once he had degenerated from this pure and blessed state of his nature, and had thrown off the government of his reason, and subjected himself to the tyrannic sway of his brutal appetites, he thereby unqualified himself to live under God's immediate dominion. For now he being governed by his sensual appetites, and they by the sensual objects that surround him, scarce any thing else can strike upon his hopes and fears, but what is carnal and sensual; or if any thing else doth, to be sure some carnal object immediately interposes and breaks the stroke, and renders it faint and ineffectual; so that now God, who is solely the object of our faith and reason, can scarce be admitted to speak with our hopes and fears, by which we are made to be governed; or if he be, his soft still voice is immediately drowned in the perpetual clamour which these sensitive goods and evils raise about us. Wherefore having thus unqualified ourselves, by our apostasy from the primitive state of our nature, to live under the immediate wing and government of God, and he being resolved, in tender commiseration to us, not to aban-

don us for ever, did, in his infinite wisdom, project a new method of governing us, more accommodated to this our degenerate state, viz. by uniting himself to sensible matter, and therein addressing to our bodily senses in audible voices, visible appearances, and finally in our own form and nature, which, of all other sensible things, we are most apt to be affected with, to love, and honour, and reverence, and obey. For so immediately after his fall God appeared to Adam, probably in a glorious human form, and spake to him in an audible voice; and afterwards he did the same to the patriarchs, and to the whole nation of the Jews from mount Sinai, among whom he also dwelt in a visible glory: by which means he acquired to himself the same advantage of governing those sensual men that sensible objects had, which, by striking on their bodily sense, did more powerfully insinuate themselves into their wills and affections. But all these sensible appearances of God were only as so many *præludia* to his assuming our nature into personal union with his Godhead, and therein exhibiting himself familiarly to the bodily senses of mankind, which though he now ceases to do, as being exalted far above our sight, on the right hand of God the Father, there to reign till the consummation of all things, yet seeing we believe he is there visible in himself, clothed in a most glorious human form, we can by imagination supply the want of our sight of him, and reach him by our inward sense, though we cannot come at him by our outward. And whereas, were he a mere Spirit, we could have no imagination of him, because imaginations are nothing but the images of sensible things, we can now, by the

strength of our imagination, fetch him down from the heavens when we please, and set him before our minds in all that venerable majesty wherein he sits at the right hand of his Father. So that though he be never present to our outward sense, yet, which is almost equivalent, whenever we have occasion to converse with him, we can make him present to our inward, viz. our fancy and imagination; into this spacious gallery of the pictures of sensible things our mind can walk when it pleases, and there behold him in effigy, though it cannot see him face to face: and considering how much we are governed, in this degenerate state of our nature, by fancy and imagination, as well as by sight and feeling, it is doubtless a most advantageous circumstance of God's government of the world, that he governs us by one whom we can fancy and imagine, when we cannot see or feel him. There are a great many men that never saw the king, who yet are overawed by the imagination they have of his majesty and greatness; whereas was not the king a man, but a pure invisible spirit, they could form no imagination of him, the want of which would very much abate, if not utterly extinguish, their awe and reverence of his person.

Considering therefore how much we are governed by our sense in this state of our apostasy, it was doubtless a wonderful wise contrivance of God, who is a pure spirit, to assume to himself some sensible matter, that therein, by presenting himself to our outward or inward sense, he might strike the deeper awe on us, and thereby the more effectually rule and govern us. But of all sensible matter, none could be so proper to this purpose as a human

form, in which we are inured and accustomed to be governed, and of which, as was hinted before, we have, of all sensible things, the greatest love and veneration: during this our degeneracy, therefore, by which we are so unqualified to be governed by God immediately, God the Father hath most wisely contrived to govern us by God-man; i. e. by his own eternal Son, hypostatically united to our natures. But when once mankind is recovered out of his lapsed condition, when our sense is perfectly subdued to our reason, all our faculties are reduced into their primitive order, then we shall return under God's immediate dominion; for then God-man shall *deliver up the kingdom, and God shall be all in all.*

II. God now governs us by his own eternal Son in our natures, to cure and prevent the spreading contagion of idolatry. There is no one vice to which our corrupt nature is more propense, and of which it hath been more universally tardy, than that of idolatry; for as for other vices, they have their peculiar provinces, and such a vice is more predominant in such a clime and temperament of air. In one nation pride reigns, in another intemperance, in another treachery, and in a fourth malice and revenge: as for idolatry, it is an universal monarch, to whose empire all the world hath been enslaved and subjected; and notwithstanding all the care which God hath taken to prevent it, it hath spread like the plague, till it became the epidemical disease of human nature. Now to be sure such an universal effect must necessarily be owing to some universal cause; and what other can that be, than the universal degeneracy of human nature from its

primitive life of reason into a life of sense? For while man was under the government of his reason, he was as much influenced by dry arguments as he is now by his sense; and the full reason he had to believe that there is an invisible divine Being presiding over all things, did as vigorously excite him to adore and worship him as the sight of him could have done, had he appeared to his bodily eyes in a glory proportionable to the immense perfections of his nature. But when once his sense had usurped the throne of his reason, and enslaved him to its empire, the case was quite altered: now reason and argument have very little influence on him, unless it be backed with some impressions of his sense; and his predominant affections are those that are raised by the strokes of sensible objects upon the sensories of his sight, and taste, and feeling, which the divine substance and perfections can never touch, they being purely spiritual; by which means that communication and intercourse which was between God and man, whilst man was governed by reason, is mightily disturbed and interrupted, though it be not altogether stopped and intercepted; for still our reason (which was not extinguished by the degeneracy of our natures) suggests to us, that there is a God, and inspires us with an awful sense of his divine perfections, which still maintains in us religious inclinations and affections, whereby we are importuned and solicited to adore and worship; but we being under the government of sense, are thereby naturally inclined either to look upon God, who is in himself a pure invisible spirit, under the notion of a sensible being, and as such to worship him, (for so anciently some adored the sun for God, others

the universal material nature, others such and such particular parts of it;) and in this consists that gross idolatry of worshipping false gods, or at least to blend our conceptions of him with corporeal phantasms; and then to express those phantasms in outward visible images, by them to excite and direct our worship to him, (for so in most nations the supreme *Numen* was heretofore adored in statues and images of several shapes and figures, copied from the several images by which they represented him to themselves in their own vain and roving imaginations;) and herein consists that more refined idolatry of worshipping the true God in a false manner. Thus the general cause of all idolatry is nothing but the general apostasy of human nature from the life of reason to the life of sense, by which we are naturally inclined either to transform God into a gross and sensible nature, or at least to assist ourselves in conceiving of, and adoring and worshipping him by sensible and visible objects. To prevent which, God hath been graciously pleased to assume some material substance, and therein from time to time to exhibit to men's eyes a visible presence of himself, which in scripture is frequently called *the glory of the Lord*, and by the ancient Jews *the shechinah* or *habitation of God*, and consisted of a shining luminous matter, which exhibited a glorious lustre of flame or light set off with thick and solemn clouds; whence, it is probable, he is said to *cover himself with light as with a garment*, Psalm civ. 2. and in this glorious appearance he conducted Israel through the Red sea and wilderness; came down upon mount Sinai, and was seen by Moses and the elders of Israel; and from thence removed into the tabernacle,

where he fixed his abode between the cherubims, and from whence he frequently displayed himself before the whole congregation in the beams of that visible glory which he there assumed as the symbol of his special presence: and by thus doing he took a most wise and effectual course, not only to raise and excite their devotion, but also to restrain and confine it within its proper bounds and limits; for while men are under the government of sense, there is nothing hath that prevalence with them, to excite their affections and fix their thoughts, as material phantasms; so that God, by exhibiting to them a visible presence of himself, and thereby impressing their imaginations with a material phantasm of his presence and glory, did at once both spur their affections, and bridle their fancies from roving into wild similitudes of him, and thereby take an effectual course to prevent the worshipping him by those outward images which they exemplified from the similitudes which they framed of him in their own fancies: and having this visible glory to entertain their fancies, they had the less temptation from their sense to hunt after sensible similitudes and representations of him, that outward shechinah, which they sometimes saw, being a sufficient help to raise up their grovelling minds and carnal affections to the contemplation and worship of his invisible glory. And that that outward visible glory, in which he appeared to them, was intended for this purpose, seems plainly implied in Deut. iv. 12. where Moses tells them, that *when God spake to them out of the midst of the fire, they heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude;* and so again, ver. 15. from whence he infers, *Take ye*

therefore good heed unto yourselves—lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make ye a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, &c. ver. 16, 17. Where by *their seeing no similitude* is not meant that they saw nothing; for God himself had promised Moses, that *the third day he would come down in the sight of all the people on mount Sinai*, Exod. xix. 11. and therefore in all probability they saw the fire, or visible glory, in which he descended; for it is expressly said they saw it afterwards, Exod. xxiv. 17. But this fire shining without any determinate form or shape, they might very well be said to *see no similitude*; for by *similitude* it is evident he means a determinate shape, ver. 16. where he bids them beware of *making the similitude of any figure*; so that the people saw God only in an unfigured flame, or visible glory, that was cast into no determinate shape, (though within that, it is probable, as was shewn before, God appeared to Moses and the seventy elders in a glorious human shape.) And this, it seems, God deemed a sufficient help to enable them to fix their thoughts on, and determine their worship to himself; and therefore he strictly charges them to content themselves with this, and not let their fancies rove, as they were too prone to do, after formed similitudes and images of him, lest those images should create in their minds false and opprobrious notions of him, and cause them to imagine the immense Godhead, as the heathen did, *to be like unto gold, or silver, or stone engraven by art and man's device*, Acts xvii. 29. Thus men being degenerated into a life of sense, and thereby rendered extremely propense to idolatry, to worship God by

images, and thereupon to form blasphemous notions of him, as if he were such a one in himself as those images represented him, God was pleased to exhibit to them a sensible presence of himself, that thereby he might the more effectually excite their awe and reverence, and at the same time restrain their imaginations from debauching their minds with unbecoming similitudes of his infinite being and perfections.

And for the same reason that God, under the old law, appeared to the Jews in a visible glory, he afterwards appeared to this lower world, and doth still continue to appear to the upper, personally united to a human body and soul; for so St. John represents Christ assuming of human nature (who, before he assumed it, was that God who appeared to the Jews from their tabernacle in that shechinah of visible glory) to be only a removing out of one tabernacle into another, out of the tabernacle of the law into the tabernacle of human nature, John i. 14. *The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth;* where, instead of *he dwelt among us*, in the Greek it is ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, i. e. he tabernacled, or dwelt as in the tabernacle, among us; he removed his abode out of the old tabernacle, and took a new habitation in human nature: for that this is the apostle's meaning is evident from what follows, *and we beheld his glory*, which plainly refers to that glorious light, or flaming substance, called *the glory of the Lord*, in which of old he was wont to display himself before the congregation of Israel from between the cherubims. And in this very glory St. John says he beheld him, viz. at his

baptism and transfiguration, at both which times he was seen by them shining in the very same glory, wherein of old he was wont to shine out of the Old Testament: and therefore it is added, that this glory, wherein St. John beheld him, was *the glory as of the only begotten of the Father;* i. e. it was the very same glory with that wherein the only begotten was heretofore wont to display himself from the tabernacle of Moses: so that the meaning of the words seems at least to be this; He dwelt among us in our nature, just as heretofore he did in the Mosaic tabernacle; and in this tabernacle of our nature we twice beheld him shining forth with the same glory wherein he was wont to shine out of that old tabernacle from between the cherubims. Since therefore Christ dwelt in our nature in the same manner, and therein appeared in the same visible glory, that he formerly did in the old tabernacle, there is no doubt but he did it for the same ends and purposes; and therefore, since one of the ends of his dwelling in that tabernacle was to restrain men from running into idolatry, there is no doubt but, among others, he intended this end also in assuming our nature, than which there can be no visible appearance in nature more proper to excite our sluggish, and to determine our roving devotions upon him. For since in this life of sense which we now lead, we need a sensible presence of God to raise up our minds and affections to him, in what presence could he have appeared to us more proper for this end than that of our own nature? a presence which is not confused like that of the old tabernacle, which was only a mixture of shapeless lights and shadows; but distinct and determinate, and of our own form and shape, which, of all others,

is most familiar to, and most beloved and reverenced by us, and consequently of all others is most apt to encourage our prayers, and inflame our zeal, and raise our admiration. For in what sensible appearance could God have more powerfully affected our sense, than in that which we are most inclined to love, most prone to trust to, and most accustomed to reverence and obey; and than that, in which alone we discern the image of God, and the reflections of those divine attributes of wisdom and goodness, and truth and justice, for which we reverence and adore him? There being therefore no visible substance in which God could more advantageously exhibit himself to us, in order to the exciting our worship to him, and determining it upon him, than that of a human form, he thought meet to assume our natures into a personal union with his divinity, and therein to rule and govern us. So that now the humanity of our Saviour is the tabernacle and shechinah of God, wherein *the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily*, and the two natures, united in person and glory, are the immediate object of our worship. Wherefore, as the ancient Jews fell upon their faces and worshipped when they beheld the shechinah, or *glory of the Lord*, their imagination being thereby assisted, and their affections excited, Levit. ix. 24. so when we, by our internal sense or imagination, look up to the glorified humanity of our Saviour in heaven, it is our duty to raise up our affections to heaven, by that sensible shechinah of God, and thereupon to fall down and worship. But as the Jews, when they fell down before their shechinah, did not worship the visible light or glory separately from God, but as it was

united to and assumed into conjunction with him, so neither ought we to worship our shechinah, viz. the humanity of our Saviour, separately from his divinity, but in union and conjunction with it; and in short, as it was utterly unlawful for the Jews to worship God in any other shechinah, or sensible appearance, either unshapen or shaped, than in that glorious one which he himself vouchsafed to them, that being sufficient to affect their sense, and thereby to raise up their minds and affections to him; so is it utterly unlawful for us Christians to worship God in any other shechinah, image, similitude, or visible appearance, than that of the glorified humanity of our Saviour, that being sufficient to assist our imaginations, to elevate our hearts and devotions to him. For though we cannot behold his glorified humanity with our bodily eyes, now he is removed into heaven, yet so neither did the Jews *the glory of the Lord* (at least but very rarely) after the ark, whereupon it sat, was removed into the holy of holies, which was a figure of heaven: yet as they, being assured it was there, could easily view it in their imaginations, and thereby assist their devotion; so we being assured from scripture that Christ's humanity is in heaven, can look up thither in our imagination, and, by beholding its glory there, lift up our heavy minds and affections to the eternal divinity that inhabits it. So that if we Christians make any other shechinah or image to worship God in, besides his own humanity, which he himself made, and wherein he now dwells above in the heavens, we are of all false worshippers the most inexcusable; because by assuming our humanity God hath vouchsafed to us such an image

and shechinah of himself, as is of all others the most proper and effectual to excite and determine our devotions.

III. God hath chosen to govern us by his own eternal Son in our nature, that he might thereby the more powerfully encourage us to obedience: for now we have all the assurance in the world, that the great design of his government is to do us good, and to advance our happiness; and that under his blessed empire we shall be sure to enjoy all the graces and favours that can be wisely indulged on his part, or modestly expected on ours. Had he governed us immediately by himself, we could not have been so secure of our interest in him, as we have reason to be of our interest in his Son hypostatically united to our nature; because the divine nature, considered purely as such, is infinitely distant from ours, and has no other relation to it, than as it is the common cause of all things; and being so distant in nature from us, it would have been hard for us to imagine how he could be touched with the same tender and compassionate regard for us, as he would be, if he were nearer allied to us; especially when we reflected upon our own demerit, and considered that by our sins we had set ourselves at a wider distance from him, than we were by our natures. This, together with that anxiety which naturally arises in guilty minds, could not but have rendered us very suspicious of God's intentions towards us, had he governed us immediately by himself: but now that he governs us by his own Son, clothed in our own nature, at his hands we may with full confidence expect a most gracious and merciful treatment. For now we are assured we have a close and most intimate inte-

rest in him, by reason of his kindred and alliance to us in the same common nature, which makes him every man's another self, under different accidents and circumstances; and his nature being perfectly happy, and perfectly pure from all irregular passions and appetites, cannot but be affected with a most tender regard to all the individuals of its own kind: because being completely happy himself, he can have nothing farther to desire for himself, but that his kindred by nature, who are all his own substance dilated and multiplied, may be happy too; and being entirely good, he can have nothing of that sordid selfishness in him which doth too often contract and narrow our benevolence, and cause us like serpents to enfold ourselves within ourselves, and to turn out our stings to all the world besides. Upon both these accounts therefore, as he is a perfectly happy and perfectly good man, he cannot but bear a hearty and universal good-will to mankind; and that he doth so, he hath given us too many dear experiments to make the least doubt of it: for while he was among us, he all along preferred our interest before his own; he made himself poor to enrich us, exposed himself to contempt to raise us to glory, took upon him our guilt to release us from punishment, and willingly underwent a most miserable death, that we might live happily for ever. In all which he gave us the most glorious demonstrations, how infinitely dear the human nature, of which he participated, was to him in all those numberless individuals into which it hath been multiplied. The consideration of which is exceeding pregnant with encouragements to obedience: for seeing God governs us by one who is as well our brother by nature as our king by office, seeing he

carries our kind in his own person, and is *flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone,* we may certainly depend upon it, that he will be as kind and as gracious to us as his government, and our happiness, which is involved in it, will permit him; that so long as we are sincere to him, he will compassionate our weakness; and that when we have gone astray from him, he will graciously receive us upon our humble submissions; that he will not load us beyond our strength, nor punish us beyond our demerit, but that he will readily assist us in all our needs, and tenderly pity us in all our pitiable cases, and kindly accept of our honest endeavours, and reward them beyond all our hopes and expectations; in short, that nothing shall be able to separate us from his favour, but only our own obstinacy and wilful rebellion; and that though in this case he will be angry with us, yet he will wait to be gracious again, in expectation of our repentance, and not hastily abandon us to everlasting ruin, till we have sinned ourselves past all hope of recovery. For as to all these things the human nature in him is our constant advocate, which being our nature as well as his, makes our case its own, and is as much concerned for us, as it could reasonably be for itself, if it were in our circumstances; than which what higher encouragement to loyalty and obedience can there be given to ingenuous minds, to consider that he who reigns above in the heavens, and hath the disposal of my fate, is my kinsman by nature, who, by assuming my substance, hath assumed my interest; so that whatsoever he doth for me, he doth it for himself, that is, for his own human nature that is in me; and that therefore it is impossible but he must continue kind to me

whilst I continue dutiful to him, seeing that without great provocation he can never be unkind sure to his own nature. For this reason therefore God governs us by his Son in our own nature, that so, by this his near kindred to us, he might the better assure our diffident mind of a most gracious and merciful treatment at his hands, and thereby excite us to a free and cheerful obedience to him.

IV. God governs us by his own eternal Son in our nature, that so he might the more powerfully excite our gratitude and ingenuity, and thereby oblige us to render him a more free and generous obedience, which is the obedience he delights in, and that alone which answers the end of his government. For that which he aims at in governing us, is to subdue the rebellion of our nature against the eternal laws of right reason, that thereby he may render us more and more rational, and consequently more and more prepared to participate of the happiness of a rational nature, which is never to be effected by a forced and constrained obedience; for so long as our obedience is forced, our wills and affections are unsubdued, and all our outward submissions are only the disguise of a treacherous and rebellious nature: we would still fly out into acts of rebellion, but we dare not; our inclinations are as stiff and obstinate as ever, and the restraint which our fear lays upon them is so far from conquering them, that it only heightens and enrages them. Till therefore our obedience becomes generous and free, and doth proceed from a willing mind, from a mind that is influenced by ingenuous motives, it will signify little or nothing to the amendment of our nature; which, notwithstanding its beautiful rind and outside, will

still remain corrupt and rotten at the core. Now to render us freely and willingly obedient, what more effectual method could God have taken than this, of governing us by his own Son in our nature? For in this our nature he was our Priest; and, as I shewed before, it was infinitely reasonable he should be so; and by what more endearing motive can we be obliged to obey him than this, that now he is in heaven he rules and governs us in that very nature which he sacrificed for us when he was upon the earth; and that it is in that individual humanity, which as our Priest he offered up for us on the cross, that he now reigns over us at the right hand of God; so that he who is now our King was once our sacrifice, and that not by constraint, but by his own free offer and consent! For to redeem the lives of our souls, which by a thousand guilts were forfeited to the vengeance of God, he freely chose to assume our nature, and therein to undergo our punishment, that so we might escape, and be happy for ever: and being governed, as we are, by a King that died for us, that willingly died a woful, shameful death, to ransom our lives from death eternal, what monsters of ingratitude must we be, if we still persist in our rebellions against him! When I consider that he who exacts my obedience hath spent his own heart's blood for me, that he who requires me to sacrifice my lusts to him did cheerfully sacrifice his own life for me; how can I grudge to comply with his demands, without blushing and confusion? O ungrateful! had he been as backward to die for thee as thou art to submit to him, thou hadst been a wretch, a miserable desperate wretch, for ever. With what face then canst thou pretend to any thing that is

modest or ingenuous, tender or apprehensive in human nature, that thinkest it much to render him those duties which he demands of thee, and which he demands for no other reason, but because they are necessary to thy happiness, when thou knowest he never thought it much to pour out his soul for thee in the bitterest agonies and torments that ever human nature endured? If therefore it be possible to work up our degenerate natures into a free and cheerful obedience to God, one would think this consideration should do it, that he whom God hath constituted our King, to demand our obedience, demands it in our own nature, which he assumed that he might die for us, and thereby release us from that dreadful obligation we were under to have died for ever. So that now, while his authority bespeaks our awe and reverence, his blood bespeaks our gratitude and ingenuity, and that in such language, and with such powerful rhetoric and persuasion, as is impossible for us to resist, unless we are resolved to outvie the devils themselves in ingratitude, who, though they have been audacious enough to outface the authority of their Maker, were never so much devils yet as to turn a deaf ear to the vocal blood and wounds of a Redeemer.

V. And lastly, God governs us by his own eternal Son in our own natures, that thereby he may give us the more ample assurance of our future reward. Had he continued to govern us by himself immediately, we had wanted one of the most encouraging instances of his immense bounty in rewarding obedience that ever was given to the world; and that is his advancement of our Saviour to that mediatorial royalty which he now exercises at the right

hand of the Majesty on high. For had our Saviour been God only, he had been incapable of reward, his happiness, as such, being so immense, as that it can admit of no addition: but being man as well as God, he is thereby capacitated for all that vast reward which the possession of his mediatorial kingdom, together with an everlasting heaven, includes: and all this reward is the product of that perfect and profound obedience which he rendered to his Father whilst he was in this world. So that now in him, by whom God hath promised to reward our obedience, we have an illustrious instance of God's liberality in rewarding obedience; by his happy fate, we may be fully assured, that we shall not serve God for nought, but that the reward of our obedience shall ten thousand fold exceed the labour and difficulty of it: for he is a man as well as we, though he be hypostatically united to God; and this man, for some few years' faithful service upon earth, for revealing God's will to men, and exhibiting a perfect example of obedience to it, for exposing himself to some temporal calamities, and finally for offering up himself a spotless victim for the sins of the world, is now advanced to the utmost height of bliss and glory that it is possible for a creature to arrive to; he is set far above all principality and power, he is served and adored as the only potentate under God the Father throughout all the heavenly world; he is worshipped and celebrated by cherubim and seraphim, by archangels and angels; he is extolled in the songs of the patriarchs and prophets, the apostles and evangelists, the confessors and martyrs; and his name is resounded with everlasting praises and thanksgivings throughout all the vast choir of the

spirits of just men made perfect; and, in a word, he hath *all power given him both in heaven and earth,* and to his all commanding will the whole creation is subjected. In this ever blessed King, therefore, by whom God now rules us, we have for the assurance of our hope of a future reward the most stupendous instance of it that ever was given to the world. And indeed, since the great end of Christ's mediation was to reduce men to their duty, by giving them a sure and certain hope of the remission of their sins at present, and of a glorious reward hereafter, it was highly convenient that itself should be an example of its own design, and that the glorious part of it should be made the reward of the more painful and difficult; that so, having in the mediation itself a signal instance of God's immense liberality in rewarding obedience, we might thereupon the more confidently expect that glorious recompense of reward which God hath promised to those that obey him, and be thereby the more vigorously excited to our duty. And hence our Saviour proposes himself to us as an instance of the reward of obedience, *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I have overcome, and am sat down with my Father on his throne:* as much as if he should have said, That upon your overcoming the difficulties of your duty you shall receive a most glorious reward, you need not at all doubt, having so illustrious an example of it in myself, who, having conquered the difficult parts of my mediation, which was to teach you as a Prophet, and to expiate for you as a Priest, am now crowned with the reward of transacting the glorious part of it; i. e. *sitting with my Father on his*

throne, and there reigning with him in unspeakable glory and beatitude: and accordingly the apostle bids us *look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despised the shame, and is sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty on high*, Heb. xii. 2.

SECT. XIV.

That Jesus Christ is the Mediator, of whom we have been treating.

HAVING in the foregoing sections explained at large the nature and offices of the Mediator between God and men, all that now remains is to prove that Jesus Christ, the author of our religion, is the person whom God hath ordained and constituted this mediator between him and us. And that he is so, he himself openly averred whilst he was upon earth, and afterwards proclaimed it to the world by the mouth of his apostles. But this singly by itself is no argument at all of the truth of the thing, because a deceiver might have averred the same thing: and since there were sundry pretenders to this office as well as he, it was necessary there should be some other evidence of his being invested with it, besides his pretending to it; otherwise it would have been impossible for us to distinguish him from those that falsely pretended to it: and accordingly he himself tells us, John v. 31. *If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true;* i. e. If I can produce no other testimony of my being the Mediator than my own bare word, you have no reason at all to believe me; and therefore he tells us, that he had not only John's witness to it, who was his forerunner,

but also a much greater than John's, even the witness of his Father, ver. 32, 33, 36, 37. Now there are three ways by which his Father testified for him; all which do abundantly evince his being the true Mediator. First, by sundry ancient predictions of him, which were all exactly accomplished in him; for *the testimony of Jesus*, saith St. John, is *the spirit of prophecy*, Rev. xix. 10. Secondly, by sundry voices from heaven, by which the Father proclaimed him his *well beloved Son*. Thirdly, by miracles, which by the power of God he frequently wrought in his own person while he was upon earth, and in the persons of his followers after his ascension into heaven. To treat of all which would require a volume by itself: and therefore, for the first of these ways, I shall refer the English reader to the reverend Mr. Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah; wherein the testimony of prophecy is handled at large with very great strength and clearness of judgment. And as for the second way of God's bearing witness to Jesus, viz. by voices from heaven, I refer the reader to our learned Dr. Hammond's Reasonableness of the Christian Religion, at the end of his Practical Catechism; it being my intent to insist only upon the third and last way of God's attesting Jesus to be the Mediator, viz. by miracles; for this way our Saviour himself most insists on and appeals to. So in the afore-cited John v. 36. *But I have a greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.* So also John x. 25. *The works which I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.* And in John xv. 24.

our Saviour makes the inexcusable aggravation of the Jews' infidelity to be this, that they would not be convinced by all those miraculous works which he had done among them; *If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.* In these and sundry other places, our Saviour appeals to those miraculous works which he did, as to a certain testimony from God, that he was the only true Messias or Mediator between God and men. And indeed, seeing the great aim and design of our Saviour's mediation is to advance the honour of God and the perfection of souls; and seeing how admirably it is framed and contrived to promote those blessed ends, miracles are a most certain attestation of the truth of it: for though the scripture tells us of false miracles wrought by the power of evil spirits, and history furnishes with innumerable instances of it; yet it is against all reason to imagine that ever evil spirits would exert their power to attest a doctrine so infinitely repugnant to their own temper and interest. Had the design of our Saviour's mediation been to alienate men's minds from God and goodness, we might have justly concluded all his miraculous works to be nothing but magical tricks performed by confederacy with the Devil. For how could we have imagined either that God or any good spirit would ever have employed his power to propagate a doctrine so infinitely repugnant to his will and nature, seeing it is equally incredible either that a bad religion should be the will of a good God, or that the God of truth should bear false witness to a lie? And therefore we always find, that those false miracles, effected by

evil spirits, whereof the scripture and history make mention, were always wrought to deprave men's minds with vicious principles, and to seduce men from God to superstition and idolatry, or to confirm them in it: but that an impious spirit should ever work miracles to promote true piety, to inspire men's minds with great and worthy thoughts of God, and suitable affections towards him; that a malicious, proud, unjust, and revengeful spirit, should by miraculous signs endeavour to reduce the world to the practice of charity, humility, justice, patience, meekness, and equanimity, is infinitely incredible. And therefore, since the doctrine of our Saviour's mediation doth, above all the religions that ever were professed in the world, most powerfully oblige us to these and all other instances of piety and virtue, we may depend upon it, that though the Devil had known it to be a lie, he would never have been so great a fool as to cheat the world into the belief of it; for though he loves to deceive, yet there is nothing in nature he more hates, than to deceive men into piety and virtue, because hereby he deceives himself, and betrays his own interest in the world. The miracles of our Saviour therefore being all designed to attest a most pure and heavenly doctrine, a doctrine that is throughout exactly conformable to the nature of God, and infinitely abhorrent to the genius of devils, must necessarily be the effects of a divine power; because to work miracles for the attestation of such a doctrine could be neither agreeable to any other nature, nor serviceable to any other interest but God's.

Now of all the miraculous testimonies which God gave to our Saviour, there is none to which he did

so often appeal, and upon which he did so much stake the credit of his doctrine, as that of his own resurrection from the dead. For thus when he had performed that heroic act of zeal, whipping the money-changers out of the temple, and the Jews required some sign of him by what authority he did it; he bade them *Destroy this temple*, pointing to his own body, *and in three days I will raise it up again*, John ii. 19. So also, when the Pharisees desired him to give them some sign of his being the true Messias, he tells them, that *no other sign should be given them, but only the sign of the prophet Jonas: for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth*, Matt. xii. 39, 40. which necessarily implies, that after that he should rise again. And accordingly we find that after he was risen and ascended, the principal business of his apostles was to testify his resurrection to the world: for so, Acts i. 22. St. Peter makes this to be the reason why it was necessary that one should be chosen into the apostolate to supply the room of Judas, *that he might be a witness with them of Christ's resurrection*. And in Acts iv. 33. we are told, *that with great power the apostles gave witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus;* and still when they were to prove any article of the Christian faith, this they urge as the great argument. Thus from the resurrection of Christ St. Paul proves the general resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. So also Acts xvii. 31. he proves that *God hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained*, viz. Christ Jesus, by this very topic,

whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead: and 1 Pet. i. 3. that apostle makes Christ's resurrection from the dead to be the great motive of credibility *by which God hath begotten them again into a lively hope* of future happiness: so also, Acts ii. 36. *Therefore* (saith the same apostle, i. e. because God had raised him from the dead, ver. 24.) *let all the house of Israel know, that God hath made this same Jesus both Lord and Christ:* and Rom. i. 4. he is said to be *declared the Son of God, by the resurrection from the dead:* yea, so undoubted an argument is this of Christ's being the true Messias or Mediator, that the Jews themselves were convinced, that they must either allow him to be so, or else outface the truth of his resurrection; which put them upon all possible ways of stifling the report of it, knowing that if once it obtained credit in the world, *the last error would be worse than the first,* Matt. xxvii. 64. From all which it is evident, that it was taken for granted, not only by Christ himself and his apostles, but even by his most avowed enemies, that supposing his resurrection to be true, it would from thence undeniably follow, that he was the Messias or Mediator.

In the management of this argument therefore I shall endeavour these two things:

First, To prove the truth and reality of this miraculous attestation which God gave to our Saviour, viz. by raising him from the dead.

Secondly, To shew what an excellent convincing argument this is of the truth of his doctrine and mediation.

1. I shall endeavour to prove the truth and reality

of this miraculous attestation which God gave to our Saviour, viz. by raising him from the dead; which being a matter of fact, independent from all necessary causes, is capable of no other proof to those who were not eyewitnesses of it, but only that of credible testimony. Thus that Julius Cæsar was killed in the senate house, is a matter of fact, the truth of which is acknowledged by all the world, and that man would be accounted little better than mad that should make the least doubt of it; and yet we have no other way of proving this, but only by the concurrent testimony of credible historians, which being as great an evidence as the matter is capable of, is as much as any reasonable man can require to induce him to believe it. For although testimony be the only evidence by which matters of fact can be proved; yet it is such an evidence as hath force enough in it to induce any reasonable man to believe its proposals: and there are ten thousand things which we do as firmly assent to upon the evidence of testimony, as to any propositions upon the evidence of mathematical demonstration. If therefore the resurrection of our Saviour be but sufficiently attested, that is as good an argument of the truth of it as the nature of the thing will bear; and when it is made but as apparent that a thing is, as it could possibly be if it really were, there is no farther proof of it can be reasonably expected; and if, notwithstanding this, men will not believe, it is impossible that any reason should convince them. But in this testimony of our Saviour's resurrection there is as much evidence and credibility as there can be in any testimony whatsoever. For to give a testimony of the utmost force

of credibility, six things are required. First, That they that give it should be certainly informed of the truth of what they do attest. Secondly, That there should be a concurrence of a sufficient number of witnesses. Thirdly, That there should be no visible reason to suspect their truth and integrity. Fourthly, That there should be no apparent motive to induce them to give false witness. Fifthly, That they give some great security for the truth of what they say. And sixthly, That they also produce some certain sign or token of the reality of their testimony. And when all these circumstances do concur in a testimony, they render it as highly credible as it is possible for a testimony to be. Now in that testimony which we have of our Saviour's resurrection, there was, as I shall shew in the particulars, a full concurrence of them all. For,

1. They who testified it were certainly informed whether it were true or no; for they declare that they were eye and ear-witnesses of it, Acts iii. 15. and relate at large the familiar conversation they had with him after his resurrection, Acts x. 41. and they tell the story of it with so many circumstances, that it is impossible they should be deceived. For at his resurrection they find the stone rolled away from the mouth of his sepulchre, and nobody therein, although it was guarded by soldiers; so that it was impossible for any body to steal him away: and that it was his own body wherein he arose, and no aerial phantasm, evidently appears by what he did to convince St. Thomas, who would not believe, unless he might put his hand into the hole of his side, and see the print of the nails that pierced his hands, to which our Saviour readily condescended: and so

far were the apostles from being over credulous, that when he appeared to them after his resurrection, it is said, that they suspected him to be a spirit, or walking ghost; and to convince them of their mistake, he was fain to appeal to the judgment of their senses: *Handle me, and see,* saith he; *for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have,* Luke xxiv. 39. and afterwards, more fully to satisfy their yet scrupulous minds, he eat and drank in the midst of them, ver. 43. Now the more suspicious and incredulous they were at first, the greater evidence it is that they were throughly informed of what they testified; that there was an undeniable evidence in the thing, else how could it have satisfied such scrupulous and incredulous persons; and that they were far from being willing to be abused themselves, or from having any design to abuse the world. And that their outward sense was not imposed upon by the strength of their imagination is evident, in that he conversed with them forty days together; which was too long a time for their senses to mistake an image of their fancies for a reality. For how is it conceivable, that so many persons as pretended to see him after his resurrection should for forty days together imagine that they saw him, heard him, eat and drank with him, when in reality all this scene of things was nothing but a dream or spectre of their own fancies? that their fancies should create and represent a person to them frequently appearing to them, preaching and instructing them, giving out commissions, and administering holy ordinances to them? that their fancies should draw them out to the mount of Olives after a spectre, that was visible no where but upon the stage of their own imagina-

tions, and there represent it carried up into heaven on a cloud? Surely, if they were in their wits, it was impossible for them to believe such a train of things to be real, had they been only the images of their fancies. And yet that they were in their wits is as apparent as the sun, both from their unanimous consent in the relation of the fact, with all its circumstances, and from those wise and sober writings which they left behind them, which abound with excellent morals, solid and coherent reasonings, strong and powerful persuasions, without the least intermixture either of flat impertinence or ranting enthusiasm: which is a plain demonstration, that they were certainly informed concerning the matter of fact which they testified, whether it were true or false.

2. Another circumstance requisite to render a testimony highly credible, is the concurrence of several witnesses; of which we have a remarkable instance in this testimony of our Saviour's resurrection. For if to those five hundred brethren and upwards, who, as St. Paul tells us, saw our Saviour after he was risen, 1 Cor. xv. 6. you add the congregation of the disciples he appeared to, when he baffled the infidelity of St. Thomas, together with those great assemblies that saw him in the mount of Galilee, and upon mount Olivet, from whence he ascended; it is not improbable, but that there were some thousands of persons that saw him after his resurrection, among all whom we find the most exact agreement both in the matter and circumstances of what they did attest, which, had it not been true, must have been morally impossible. For how could so vast a number of men have so punctually agreed in the same story, had it been a lie? especially when they were

so narrowly sifted, so craftily examined and cross-examined, as doubtless these men were, (or at least would have been, had there been any just ground to suspect them,) by the Jewish magistrates, who were all of them professed enemies to our Saviour and his doctrine. For had their testimony been forged, it is not imaginable how they should foresee what questions the magistrates would propose to them; nor consequently, how they should agree what answers to return to their several interrogatories: so that when they came to be examined, they must of necessity have thwarted and contradicted one another, at least in some circumstances of time or place, or the like, by which means the whole forgery must have soon been unravelled, and the credit of it for ever dashed out of countenance. But that no such thing ever happened is evident by the credit which their testimony found, even among those who had the best opportunities of examining whether it were true or false; for the truth of Christ's doctrine depending upon the truth of this story of his resurrection, there can be no doubt but the Jewish magistrates, whose interest made them enemies to Christ, would not have been wanting, had they thought it feasible, to try all ways to disprove the truth of it; and if they did not, no other reason can be given of it, but only this, that the truth of the thing was so notorious, that it would have been ridiculous for them to attempt the disproving it; but if they did, it had been a very easy matter for them, had it been a lie, to have detected it. For the number of the witnesses being so great, and the Jews having every day opportunity of conversing with them, they might have easily trapped them in their

relations, it being impossible, that among a great number of conspiring impostors there should be always an exact harmony and agreement. For suppose that such a story as this were told in London, that a certain man dwelling at Westminster, and pretending himself to be the Son of God, and the lawful heir of the crown of England, had preached up a new religion, requiring all people, under pain of damnation, to embrace his doctrine, and submit to his government; and that as a sign of the truth of all this, he had publicly declared, that three days after his death he would rise again: whereupon the last Friday was seven-night he was put to death by the magistrates, and notwithstanding he was buried, and his sepulchre dammed up with a huge stone, and a guard of soldiers set to watch it, lest his proselytes should steal him away, yet the Sunday following he arose, and hath since been seen by several hundreds, if not some thousands of the neighbourhood, many of whom had touched and handled him, eat, and drank, and conversed familiarly with him, among whom there was Peter such a one, Thomas such a one, John such a one, naming some twenty or thirty persons well known among the neighbours, who could give a more particular account of the matter, and tell the names of most of the persons that were eyewitnesses with them: why now, it cannot be supposed, but that as soon as ever this formal rumour began to spread, (especially if it found credit among the multitude, and the pretended witnesses of it should be so bold as to go and assert it before the king and council, as the apostles did before the rulers of the Jews,) I say, it cannot be supposed, but that care would be taken, that the matter

should be immediately sifted, and the several neighbouring justices required to call these witnesses to account; who, by pumping and examining, promising and threatening them, could not fail of extorting the truth from them in a very little while: for it is impossible but they must have found them faltering in the relation of their story, and counter-witnessing one another. John would have told it with this circumstance, and Peter with the contrary, and Thomas would have thwarted and contradicted them both; so that when they came to compare their several relations with one another, in all probability they would have found as great a confusion among them, as there was in the language of the bricklayers of Babel. And therefore though at first perhaps the story might have seemed plausible, and a great many credulous people might have believed it, yet every day would have rendered it more suspicious, and the truth must at last have triumphed and prevailed. But yet, though the eyewitnesses of our Saviour's resurrection were thus sifted and examined over and over, their relation every one day got ground and credit even in Jerusalem itself, where the thing was transacted, and where every one might easily inform himself concerning the credit of the relaters, and the circumstances of their relation; insomuch that forty days after, it was so far from being dashed out of countenance, that at one sermon of St. Peter's there were no less than three thousand persons converted to the belief of it; and so it still grew and increased, till at last, in despite of all the wit and malice of its opposers, it was embraced and acknowledged throughout all the world; which is an undeniable evidence of the exact

agreement there was in the testimony of the several witnesses of our Saviour's resurrection.

3. Another circumstance requisite to render a testimony highly credible is, when there is no visible reason to suspect the honesty and integrity of the attestors; which circumstances did also concur to credit the testimony of our Saviour's resurrection. For that the first testifiers of it were men of a clear and unsuspected honesty, will appear to any man that seriously considers either the doctrine which they taught, or the genius of their followers, or the manner of their testimony, or the success it had among those who were best able to satisfy themselves whether they were honest or no. First, as for their doctrine, there is nothing can be more contrary to lying, dissembling, and hypocritical reservation: it strictly requires plainness and simplicity of speech, and that our words should be the images and interpreters of our minds; it brands and stigmatizes all deceit and falsehood with a most infamous character, and irrevocably consigns all wilful liars to the miserable portion of the father of lies. If then they believed their own doctrine, it is not to be imagined they would ever have defended it with frauds and impostures; and whether they believed it or no, it is hardly supposable that they would have so loudly declaimed against dishonesty, had they been at least visibly dishonest themselves, since by condemning it in others they must have libelled themselves, and emblazoned to the world their own shame and infamy. And then, secondly, as for the genius and temper of their disciples and followers, it is plain, that there never was any thing more open and sincere: for such was the ingenuous simplicity of

the primitive Christians, that they thought it a disparagement to be put to their oaths, thinking it sufficient for every good man to give this assurance of his truth, ἀληθῶς λέγω, *I speak truly*; and when they were most severely examined by their bloody persecutors concerning their faith, they never either denied or concealed it, counting it a most impious thing to dissemble the truth; and though, when they were questioned, they could easily have either denied or evaded it, yet they scorned to live upon such base terms, to be beholden to their hypocrisy for their lives. Yea, so conspicuous was their honesty to all the world, that the heathen themselves were forced to acknowledge it. For so Pliny, in the account which he gave the emperor Trajan of the Christians, tells him, that after the strictest inquiry he could make of them, even of those who had renounced Christianity, he found this to be the greatest fault they were guilty of, that they used harmlessly to meet to worship Christ, and at those meetings to bind themselves by a sacrament that they would not do any wickedness, that they would not steal, nor rob, nor commit adultery, nor falsify their words, nor withhold any thing wherewith they had been intrusted, wherever it were required at their hands. Such was the temper of the immediate disciples of the eyewitnesses of our Saviour's resurrection: and is it likely that the scholars would have proved so honest, had they not been taught by the example as well as by the doctrine of their masters? For to be sure, had the apostles been dishonest, their immediate disciples must needs have known something of it; and being acquainted with it, they would doubtless have resolved either not to continue

their disciples any longer, or else to have imitated them in all their secret cheats and knaveries; and so from the masters to the disciples dishonesty would have been propagated from one generation to another: but, since the contrary happened, it is plain, that the first propagators were men of very honest and sincere minds; which will yet further appear, if we consider, thirdly, the manner of their testimony, which they delivered with the greatest plainness and simplicity of speech, the greatest freedom and assurance of spirit, and the greatest particularity, as to all its circumstances. They never went about to involve their sense in ambiguous words, or to recommend it to the world in a pompous style, in pedantic flourishes or flattering insinuations, which is the way of all impostors: but as men that were well assured of the truth of what they said, they exposed it to the world in the most naked and simple expressions, and so left it to recommend itself. They did not whisper their testimony in corners, as if they were either afraid or ashamed to produce it in the open light; but with the greatest confidence and assurance they published it in the midst of Jerusalem, yea, and before the sanhedrin itself, where, if it had been false, it was impossible but it should be detected. And whereas it is the way of impostors to reserve themselves in generals, knowing that should they descend to particulars it would be hard for them to avoid discovery or contradiction, the apostles did not only report a general story of Christ's resurrection, but related it with all its most minute and particular circumstances; nor did they change or alter any one of them upon different examinations before different examiners, but

still persisted with the greatest constancy to themselves and harmony with each other; so that if ever there might be any thing gathered of the temper of persons from the particular manner of their discourses, we may certainly discern the greatest fidelity in the apostles in the manner of their expressing themselves to the world. But then, in the fourth and last place, the credit which they found among those who were the best able to satisfy themselves whether they were honest or no, is a further evidence of their fidelity: for had they not been men of known honesty, it is not to be imagined that they could ever have obtained so much credit in a place where they were so intimately known, and among persons with whom they every day conversed with the greatest openness and freedom; especially considering how contrary their testimony was to the genius and interest of those who gave credit to them, many of whose hands had been imbrued in the blood of our Saviour; by which they were obliged, in their own vindication, so far as in them lay, to disprove the story of his resurrection; because, if that proved true, it proved them guilty of the most monstrous impiety that ever was acted, viz. the murder of the Son of God. And is it likely that the murderers of our Saviour would ever have believed the story of his resurrection, which was so clear an evidence of his innocency and their own guilt, had they had any reason to suspect the veracity of those that attested it; and yet in despite of themselves, great numbers of them were forced to believe it, although as soon as they did so, they were *pricked at the heart* with the sense of their horrid impiety, and forced to cry out in a bitter agony of

conscience, *Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?* And as for those of them who had no hand in his murder, to be sure they were greatly prejudiced against the belief of his resurrection, because upon that depended the truth of his doctrine, which plainly contradicted a great part of that religion in which they had been educated, and of which they were infinitely zealous; and therefore to be sure they would never have given credit to it, had they not had undeniable evidence of the truth and integrity of those that testified it, especially when it was so easy for them to satisfy themselves about it. For it is not imaginable they would ever have entertained so ungrateful a story, but upon the most strict inquiry into the credit of its relators; and if upon inquiry they had found the least flaw, either in them or in their testimony, if they could have convicted them of any dishonest practices for the time past, or catched them tripping or contradicting one another in what they testified at present, they would soon have made the world ring of it; and the Jews, who were dispersed through all their neighbouring nations, would have divulged to all the world their fraudulent practices, and posted them up wherever they came for infamous knaves and liars; which must have infallibly blasted the credit of their testimony, and caused it to have been hissed out of the world for a fulsome imposture. Wherefore since no such thing ever happened, but contrariwise the credit of their report of Christ's resurrection did, in despite of all the wit and malice of its opposers, every day spread and increase, even in Jerusalem itself, where the thing was acted, and where the reporters of it lived, and that not only for a few days or

months, but from year to year, even till Jerusalem itself was destroyed; since, I say, all this is evident, what greater argument can we desire of the truth and integrity of those that attested it? And supposing them to be honest, their testimony must be true, because it was not matter of opinion, in which it is possible for the wisest men to be mistaken, but matter of fact, of which they had certain information from their own senses: and he who says that he saw such a thing, and it is evident that his senses were not imposed on, lies against his own conscience, if it be not true that he saw it.

4. Another circumstance requisite to render a testimony highly credible is, that there is no apparent motive to induce the attestors of it to testify falsely. For whether they are honest or no, we cannot well suppose that in a matter of importance they will testify falsely, without some great motive inducing them thereunto: but as for the witnesses of our Saviour's resurrection, had they not been certain of the truth of it, they could have no imaginable motive to induce them to attest it; for they could never hope to reap the least advantage from it, either here or hereafter. Not *here*, for their Lord had told them beforehand, *that if they would be his disciples, they must suffer persecution;* and they themselves could not but foresee, that by testifying his resurrection they must infallibly alarm all the world against them, because the doctrine which they confirmed by it was extremely opposite both to the present religion and interest of the Jews, and to the common theology of the Gentiles; and that therefore, by going about to establish it, they must in effect proclaim war against all the world, and con-

sequently expose themselves to the utmost rigour and severity that the wit and malice of men could invent or inflict; which must be a very sorry motive sure to induce men in their wits to undertake the propagation of a known imposture. But perhaps it may be thought they did all this for the glory and reputation of being the founders of a new sect. But from whence, I beseech you, could they promise themselves success? Not from their master Jesus, who, if their testimony was not true, they could not but know was still detained under the power of the grave; not from God, whom, if they testified falsely, they were conscious they wickedly belied in suborning his power and veracity to bear witness to a falsehood; not from the force and charms of their own eloquence or sophistry, for that they pretended not to; not from their riches, for their staves and scrips were all the treasure they carried with them; nor from any authority or power they had, or ever were like to have; for how could such poor illiterate persons as they ever expect to arrive to an authority great enough to contest with all the power and wisdom of the world, which was armed against them: in a word, not from any proneness they found either in Jews or Gentiles to embrace the doctrine which they designed by this their testimony to confirm and assert, that being everywhere gainsaid and opposed by the interests and affections of both; and if their testimony was not believed, (as it was very unlikely it should, if it had not been true,) what could they expect, but to be branded to all posterity as a company of infamous cheats and impostors? So that unless they had been assured that their testimony was true, they had all

the reason in the world to expect that it would prove the most fatal and unprofitable lie that ever was invented or broached among mankind; since it was so far from promising them any worldly advantage, that it visibly exposed them to all the miseries and calamities of human life. And then, if they knew this story of Christ's resurrection, which they attested, to be a lie, they had a great deal less reason to expect any advantage from it in the world to come. For either they believed that religion which they sought to confirm, by attesting this story, or they did not; if they did not, how could they hope to fare ever the better in the other world for endeavouring to propagate a false religion in this? if they did, how could they hope to be made happy hereafter, by telling a lie for that religion which excommunicates liars out of the kingdom of happiness? Since therefore, if their testimony had been false, they could expect to reap no advantage from it in either world, doubtless they would never have been so mad as to assert and attest it, had they not known it to be true: for what man in his wits would ever tell a lie, that hath no reason to expect any other fruit from it, but only to die for it here, and to be damned for it hereafter?

5. Another circumstance requisite to render a testimony highly credible is, that the testifiers of it do give some great security for the truth of what they say; and therefore it is required by human laws, that in all great matters of fact the witnesses should give the security of their oaths, or of some great pledge to be forfeited by them, in case their testimony prove false. But never did any men give greater security of their truth than the witnesses of

our Saviour's resurrection; for they sealed their testimony with their blood, and rather chose to undergo the most witty and exquisite torments, than to recant any part or circumstance of what they had seen and testified concerning it: for of all the apostles, who were the chief witnesses of it, there was only one that escaped a violent death, and he, as the ecclesiastical story tells us, had not been delivered from it but by a miracle. And doubtless those other disciples, who saw and conversed with our Saviour after he was risen, and together with the apostles bore witness of it to the world, did proportionably run the same fate: and how is it imaginable, that so many men should all turn so mad together, as to lay down their lives for a pledge of the truth of a story which they knew to be all a mere cheat and imposture? Some men indeed have suffered martyrdom for professing propositions that were false, but then they thought them to be true; but no man in his wits ever died in the defence of an assertion which he knew to be false. But as for the testifiers of our Saviour's resurrection, they did all of them witness upon certain information, and did assuredly know whether their testimony were true or false; so that if Christ did not rise, as they reported, they died in the defence of a known lie, which is such a piece of folly, as doth exceed all instances of extravagance. Suppose that Æsop should have died a martyr to his own fables, or that the author of the Seven Champions should have laid down his life in the defence of St. George's killing the dragon, would not all the world have concluded them incurably distracted? But as for the apostles, their excellent writings are a sufficient demonstration that they were men of

very sound intellectuals, and therefore, though we should suppose them to be so wicked as to love lying for its own sake, we cannot suppose them to be so mad as to love it better than their own lives, as they must necessarily do, if their testimony of our Saviour's resurrection were false. But supposing that one or two of them should have proved so frantic, yet it is incredible that so many hundreds of men and women should all agree together at the same time in the same mad project, viz. to throw away their lives for no other purpose but only to cheat and abuse the world; and that no one of them should be induced, by all the hopes and fears that were set before them, to confess and discover the mad conspiracy. When they began to report the story, they could not but foresee the consequence of it, viz. that they must either recant it, and thereby proclaim themselves impostors to the world, or else lay down their lives for it. So that had they known it to be false, it would have been a prodigy of impudence in them, and folly together, not only without hope of benefit, but within prospect of a certain ruin, to have divulged a known lie to the world, and under the severest persecutions to have persisted in it without the least regret of conscience, or concernment for their own ease and safety. There never was the like instance among men, and I dare say there never will be, so long as men love themselves, and continue in their wits: and to imagine that of the witnesses of our Saviour's resurrection, of which there is no parallel example among mankind, is an argument that we have much more inclination than reason to be infidels. This therefore is plain, that the witnesses of Christ's resurrection gave as great a

pledge of the truth of their testimony as it was possible for mortal men to do; and if those men may not be believed who attest a thing upon certain knowledge, and seal it with their blood, there is no credit can be given to any human testimony; because a man's life is the greatest security that he can possibly give for his honesty.

6. Another circumstance requisite to render a testimony highly credible is, that the witnesses do give some certain sign and token that what they testify is true; and this the eyewitnesses of our Saviour's resurrection did. For in token that what they said was true, they themselves wrought sundry miracles in his name: for so we read of the apostles, that *they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following*, Mark xvi. 20. and that *with great power*, i. e. miraculous works, *the apostles gave witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus*, Acts iv. 33. and also at *Iconium the Lord gave testimony to the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands*, Acts xiv. 3. And the same was done by St. Stephen at Jerusalem, Acts vi. 8. and by St. Philip at Samaria, Acts viii. 6, 7. and by St. Paul at Ephesus, Acts xix. 11. And St. Paul assures us, *that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, the Gospel had been preached by him, with mighty signs and wonders, and by the power of the Holy Ghost*, Rom. xv. 19. All which things being recorded in an age, wherein, if they had been false, they might easily have been disproved, it had been the wildest project in the world for the apostles to have pretended to them, had they not been

notoriously true; for they must needs think, that all the world, being prejudiced against them, would be sure to keep a very strict and watchful eye on them; and that if, upon the severest inquiry, they were at any time taken tripping in this their pretence of working miracles, their fraud would soon ring through all the world, which must unavoidably prejudice their cause a thousand times more than all the miracles they pretend to could advance it: and for men that had the eyes of all the world upon them falsely to pretend to work such innumerable miracles as they did, and this not in corners, but in public view, and to name the places where they wrought them, and where they knew there were thousands that could and would certainly detect and disprove them, would have been the most prodigious instance of impudence and folly together that ever was acted by men in their wits. But so notoriously true was the matter of fact, that their most inveterate enemies, amongst both Jews and Gentiles, have not the confidence to deny it, although indeed they attribute it, even as the Jews did our Saviour's miracles, to the power of magic; for so in their Talmud, *Tractat. de Idol.* c. 1. the Jews celebrate St. James the apostle as eminent for the gift of miracles, by whom the nephew of Rab. Samuel, being bit of a serpent, would not be cured, because every disciple of Jesus was wont to heal in his name. And *Lib. Sabbat. Jerosol.* they tell us of a son of Rab. Jose, who having swallowed poison, was cured by a Christian in the name of Jesus. And as for the heathen Julian himself, he confesses that St. Paul did very wonderful things; for he says, that he was the greatest and most expert magician

that ever was, (*vid. Cyril. Alex.* lib. 3.) and the same he pronounces of St. Peter also, *id.* lib. 9. So also Celsus frequently charges the Christians with doing their mighty works by the power of some demon, adding a fiction of his own, viz. That they had received from Christ certain magical books, by which they were instructed to perform all their miracles, (*vid. Origen. cont. Cels.* p. 302. and several other places;) which is a plain confession, that such miracles were commonly performed by Christians. But that they did not perform them by any confederacy with evil spirits, as these bad men affirm, is evident, because one of their greatest and most common miracles was dispossessing these evil spirits of men's bodies, and their own temples and oracles: for the truth of which, they often provoke their adversaries, in their writings and apologies, to come and make experiment of it. Thus St. Cyprian, in his epistle to Demetrian, proconsul of Africa, "O that thou "wouldst but hear and see, when the devils, whom "thou worshippest, are adjured and tortured by us, "and with the spiritual rods and torments of our "words are ejected out of the bodies they possess, "when howling and roaring in a human voice they "confess the judgment to come: do but come and "see, whether these things we say are not true." And a little after, "If thou wilt come," saith he, "thou shalt see those whom thou worshippest for "gods, stand bound and tremble as miserable cap-"tives under our hands." Others of them appeal to the consciences of the heathens themselves, who had been spectators of their miraculous victories over these infernal spirits. So Minutius Felix; "All these things are very well known to a great

" many of yourselves, that your gods are forced by " us to confess themselves devils, when, by the tor- " ment of our words, and by the fire of our prayers, " they are chased out of human bodies; even Sa- " turn and Seraphis, and Jupiter, and the greatest " of those gods you worship, being overcome, with " sorrow are forced to acknowledge what they are; " and though it be to their shame, especially when " you are present, yet they dare not lie, but being " adjured by the true and only God, they quake " and tremble in the bodies they possess, and either " leap out immediately, or vanish by degrees." Others of them offer to make the experiment, even before the tribunals of the heathen, and to answer for the success with their own lives. So Tertullian in his Apologetick; " Let any man that is appa- " rently acted by one of your gods be brought be- " fore your own tribunals; and if that supposed god, " being commanded by any Christian to speak, doth " not confess himself to be a devil, as not daring to " lie to a Christian, take that malapert Christian, " and pour out his blood immediately." " Yea, " how often," saith he a little after, " only upon " our touch of and breathing upon possessed per- " sons, are these gods you adore, forced to depart " out of their bodies with grief and reluctancy, you " yourselves being present, and blushing at it." And these things, as Origen tells us, *cont. Cels.* lib. 7. were ordinarily performed even by the meanest Christians, which is a plain argument that it was done merely by the power of Jesus, without any conjuration or magical art. And can we imagine that the Devil, without any constraint from some superior power, would ever have quitted that ty-

ranny he had so long exercised over the bodies and consciences of men, who had hitherto adored and worshipped him; or that he would ever have confessed himself to be a devil to those men who sought the ruin of his kingdom, and made use of his confessions to that purpose, had he not been forced to it by the authority of the Father of spirits? Is it likely he would have exerted his power to the ruin of his own interest, and the amendment of those souls he had insnared and captivated, as he must necessarily have done, should he have empowered the witnesses of our Saviour's resurrection to confirm their testimony by miracles? and since they all along declared they did them in the name and by the power of Jesus, to be sure, if it had not been so, the God of truth would never have empowered them to impose such a cheat upon the world. These miracles of theirs therefore were plain signs and tokens of the truth of what they did attest, viz. that Jesus was risen from the dead; and that not only as they were so many divine seals, by which God himself did confirm their testimony, whose goodness and veracity could never have permitted him to set the seal of his miraculous power to a lie; but besides this, the apostles' miracles were so many plain demonstrations that Jesus was risen, and alive, since they did them all in his name and by his power: for how is it possible that Jesus could have empowered them to do miracles, had he been still among the dead, and in a state of inactivity? A dead man can do nothing himself, much less can he empower others to do miracles. So that by those miraculous works which the apostles did by the power of Christ, they did in effect thus bespeak the world; Look here,

O incredulous world, if nothing else will persuade you that our Lord is risen, and alive, behold the vital operations which he exerts in us his disciples: though of ourselves we are as impotent as you, yet no sooner do we invoke our great Master's name, and implore his aid, but we are presently enabled to perform mighty things beyond the power of any mortal agent; without any other charm but his powerful name, we raise the dead, bind the devils, restore the blind, recover the lame, and cure all manner of diseases: and is not this as plain a token of his being alive, as if he were now standing before you in our room, and doing all these things in his own person? If he were dead still, he could not act in us, as you see him do; and therefore if nothing else will convince ye that he is alive again, behold these mighty powers which he exerts in us; and be at length persuaded, by these sensible tokens of his activity which we produce before your eyes, that he is risen from the dead. For it is worth observing, that this gift of miracles was never so plentifully communicated to the apostles as after Christ's ascension into heaven. For before he ascended, he commanded them to *tarry at Jerusalem, till they had received the gift of the Holy Ghost*, or, which is the same thing, the gift of miracles, Acts i. 4, 5. and this gift, as he himself tells them, ver. 8. was to enable them *to bear testimony to him unto all the world.* For he being now ascended into heaven, they could no longer produce his person to convince unbelievers of the truth of his resurrection; and therefore, to supply this defect, Christ gave them the gift of miracles, that that might be, instead of his bodily presence, a plain and sensible token of his

being restored to life again. And indeed this was as certain a sign of it, as if he had continued upon earth, and openly conversed among men in the view of the world: for the most certain sign of life is action; and by what hath been said, it is apparent, that Christ did not more visibly act in his own person when he was upon earth, than he did in the persons of his apostles after he ascended into heaven. These miraculous operations therefore, which they performed by the power of Jesus, were all of them so many plain and sensible signs and tokens of the truth of what they did attest, viz. That Jesus was risen from the dead. So that considering all these circumstances of the apostles' testimony, I dare boldly affirm, that, from the beginning of the world to this day, there never was any matter of fact more sufficiently and credibly testified than this of the resurrection of our Saviour; and by raising him from the dead God hath bore witness to him before all the world, that he really is what he pretended to be, the true Messias and only Mediator between himself and us.

Which brings me to the second head I proposed, to shew what an excellent convincing argument this is of the truth of our Saviour's doctrine and mediation, and how effectually it justifies his pretence of being the true Messias and only Mediator. It is true, all the miracles which our Saviour wrought while he was upon earth were plain demonstrations of his being sent from God; and therefore to these, as I shewed before, he frequently appeals in his excellent disputations with the unbelieving Jews: and when John Baptist sent to inquire of him whether he were the Messias or no, he returns no other an-

swer but this, *Go and shew John those things which ye see and hear; that the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them*, Matt. xi. 4, 5. But his own resurrection being the greatest miracle that he ever performed, to this both himself and his apostles did most commonly appeal; insomuch that St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 14. says, *That if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and our faith vain;* because this being the grand miracle on which Christ staked the credit of his whole doctrine, if this had failed, there had been no reason to give any credit to any thing that he taught. The resurrection of Christ therefore is a certain evidence of the truth of his doctrine; only as it was the greatest of his miraculous works, it proved his doctrine no otherwise than his other miracles did; but it was the highest proof of it, as it was the greatest of his miracles. Wherefore, to shew what an excellent proof of his doctrine his resurrection was, I shall endeavour to shew that miracles in general, and particularly this of Christ's resurrection, are the best evidences of a divine revelation that the nature of the thing will bear; and this I shall do by shewing,

First, That this is the most proper and convenient evidence.

Secondly, That it is the most certain and infallible.

Thirdly, That it is the plainest and most popular.

Fourthly, That it is the shortest and most compendious.

1. First, That this evidence of miracles is the most proper and convenient to prove the truth of any pre-

tence to revelation. For as for the intrinsic arguments drawn from the nature and quality of the revelation, they may prove it indeed to be wise, and good, and holy; but how they should prove it to be immediately revealed from God, I cannot apprehend. For as for the moral writings of the heathen philosophers, they were most of them very good, and wise, and holy; but yet it doth not hence follow, that the authors of them were immediately inspired when they wrote them: notwithstanding their goodness, they might be, and doubtless were, the dictates of their own natural reason, and so may any other doctrine, how good soever it be; and though the authors of such writings may pretend to be inspired, yet that is no argument that they are. For all that I know, they may pretend to it, to give credit to their doctrine, or they may think themselves inspired when they are not; so that they have no other way to convince me that what they pretend is true, but only by giving me some certain sign and token that they are really inspired from above; and no sign can reasonably convince me of this, but such a one as I have reason to believe God alone did enable them to give me: for so long as I have just reason to suspect that the sign which they give me was produced either by their own power, or by the power of some other agent besides God, it is no sign at all to me of their being inspired by God. Miracles, therefore, being the only signs we can reasonably believe are produced by the immediate power of God, it is they alone can indicate a man's being immediately inspired by God. For how can I be assured, that what a man saith is immediately revealed to him by God, unless God himself give me some sign or token that

it is so? And how can I know that this or that is a sign or token from God, unless it be something so extraordinary and miraculous, as that, all things considered, I may reasonably conclude it was God alone that produced it? I confess, indeed, a miracle singly is not sufficient to demonstrate any doctrine to be of divine revelation; for unless the doctrine itself be good, at least unless it hath no apparent evil in it, there is no miracle whatsoever can prove it to be divine. For there is no argument in the world can persuade a reasonable man to believe God against himself; but to believe a bad doctrine to be the will of God, because it is confirmed by miracle, is to believe God's power against his goodness; and it is not more certain that God doth will what he confirms by miracles, than that he doth not, cannot will iniquity; nay, of the two, I should rather believe a good doctrine to be from God, barely because it is good, than that a bad doctrine is so, because it is confirmed by miracles; it being more possible for a wicked impostor to work a miracle, than for a holy God to will sin. But yet the goodness of a doctrine singly considered, and without the confirmation of miracles, is no certain proof that it is of divine revelation. It is true, those things in any doctrine which are morally good, and founded upon eternal reasons, may be demonstrated true by moral arguments, without any additional confirmation by miracles; but if the doctrine contain in it any proposition that is matter of pure revelation, and cannot be known without it, it is hardly possible to prove such a doctrine true without producing some miraculous sign of its truth and divinity. As for instance, how can a man know that God hath appointed Jesus to be the mediator

between himself and us, which is matter of pure revelation, wholly depending on the free-will of God, unless God himself gives us some miraculous sign, by which we may know that it is his will and appointment? And therefore we find, that there is no revelation, or pretence of revelation, but what lays claim to this way of confirmation. Thus the Mosaic religion was confirmed by sundry great and stupendous miracles: and even the false religion of the heathen pretended to this way of confirmation also; for generally they established their superstitious rites by magical tricks and incantations, they conjured their demons into their consecrated images, and made the lifeless stocks to move and speak; they pretended to effect extraordinary cures by the invocation of their idols; they often raised the devils they adored by their charms and enchantments, and made them appear in strange visible shapes to their superstitious votaries; and by these and such like miraculous pretences, they introduced all their idolatrous ceremonies; which is a plain evidence, that they thought miracles to be the most proper and natural arguments of the truth of any revelation. And since the thing is capable of no better way of demonstration, it is an unreasonable thing not to be satisfied with this: for he who will not believe that a thing which may be is, without an impossible proof of its existence, is unreasonably resolved, right or wrong, not to believe it. So that this way of Christ's proving his doctrine by his miracles, and particularly by his resurrection, being the best and most proper, if we will not believe it upon this evidence, we are incurable infidels, whom no reason in the world can convince or persuade.

2. This evidence of miracles is the most certain

and infallible medium to prove the truth of any pretence to revelation. For if God give a man power to do miracles, in token that what he says is true, he thereby sets his own seal to the truth of it; and if we are satisfied, that the miracle was wrought by the power of God, and yet will not believe the doctrine it seals, we do in effect give the lie to God himself; for a real miracle wrought to confirm a doctrine, gives as great a certainty of the truth of that doctrine as we can have of the truth of God, which is the foundation of all the certainty in the world; because if once it be granted that God may work a miracle to attest a lie, we can have no security of his truth; but for all that we know, every thing that he saith or doth may be an imposture; and if so, for all we know, he may have deceived our faculties too; and then there is nothing can be certain to us. The miracles of Christ therefore, and especially this of his resurrection, gives us as great certainty of the truth of his doctrine, as we can have of any thing. For that he was raised by the power of God is evident, because he was really dead, his heart was pierced, and the vital bonds were broken, which rendered him utterly incapable to raise himself; and supposing that there be some agent in nature besides God, that was powerful enough to raise him, yet we are sure the Devil would not do it, because, as was shewn before, he must thereby do a thing infinitely contrary to his own temper, and apparently destructive to his interest and kingdom; nor would any holy angel have done it, without a special command and commission from God, which is the same thing as if God himself had done it immediately. So that, it is plain, Christ's

resurrection must be effected either by the immediate will or by the immediate power of God; and whether it was one way or the other, it was a most certain evidence of the truth of his doctrine; because it cannot be imagined that the God of truth would either way have raised him from the dead, had he been an impostor, since, in so doing, he must have taken the most effectual course to impose a cheat upon mankind. For whilst he was alive, he promised to rise again the third day, and gave this as the great sign to the world, whereby they should know that he came from God; upon the hearing of which, all unprejudiced minds (especially considering the nature of his doctrine) had abundant reason to conclude thus with themselves: If this man make good his word, we can no longer doubt, but that he was sent from God; for to be sure, he cannot rise, unless God raise him; and it can never enter into our thoughts, that the God of truth will raise him, on purpose to delude and deceive us. When therefore he was actually risen, they could not, without being guilty of the most unreasonable obstinacy, make any farther scruple of his truth and veracity.

There was, about six hundred years ago, a certain Jew called El David, who gave out that he was Christ, and drew a great many proselytes after him; upon which he was apprehended, and brought before an Arabian prince, who asked him what miracle he could do, to convince him that he was not an impostor: to which he answered, "Sir, cut off my head, "and in a little time you shall see me alive again." Which he said to prevent some greater torments, which he feared would be inflicted on him for deluding the people. Whereupon the prince replied, "A

"greater sign than this thou canst not give: and "therefore if after I have beheaded thee thou re-"coverest to life again, both I and all my people, "and all the world sure, will acknowledge thee to "be a messenger from God." And presently he commanded him to be beheaded, and there was an end of the cheat. And so there would doubtless have been of the Christian religion, if Jesus had not been raised from the dead; for he said just as this El David did, Kill me, if you please, and when you have done so, you shall see I will live again; and upon this I stake all the credit of my doctrine. And therefore, since it came to pass according to his word, we have all the reason in the world to resolve, with that Arabian prince, to believe and acknowledge him to be sent from God: for, if there be a God that loves sincerity and truth, as we are sure there is, we are equally sure he will not conspire with an impostor to cheat and delude the world: and yet this he must have done, had Jesus been a deceiver, when he fulfilled this miraculous sign of his resurrection, upon which he suspended all the credit of his doctrine. So that now we have the same certainty of the truth of our faith, as we have of the truth of our knowledge; for the truth of our knowledge supposes, that there is a God, whose goodness will not suffer us to be deceived in those things which we clearly apprehend; and the truth of our faith supposes, that there is a God whose goodness will not suffer him to deceive us in such things as he hath given us sufficient reason to believe. For he who gives me a sufficient reason to induce me to believe a false proposition, is guilty of seducing me into a false belief;

and therefore, since God, in raising Christ from the dead, hath given us a sufficient argument to induce us to believe that he sent him, it necessarily follows, either that he did send him, or that he is guilty of deceiving and abusing us.

3. This evidence of miracles is the plainest and most popular to confirm a revelation. If the principles of revealed religion were to be proved by natural reason and philosophy, the arguments of it would be too thin and subtil for vulgar capacities, and men would never be fit to be catechized into their religion, till they had been trained up in the schools, and there instructed in the intrigues of logic and discourse; for the generality of men are capable of no other notices of things, but what are immediately impressed upon them by the objects of sense; nor have they skill enough so exactly to compare simple terms, as to connect them into true propositions, and from these to deduce their true and natural consequences. These are things that require far more leisure and skill than men's education and affairs will ordinarily afford them: so that had there not been some plainer and easier way found out, to prove the truth of Christianity than this, it had been a religion fit only for the schools of philosophers; and the vulgar, who are not capable of close and strict discourse, and have neither time nor skill enough to trace the footsteps of truth through all the intricacies of reasoning and discourse, must have been damned to eternal infidelity. And this, without doubt, was one main reason why the moral philosophy of the heathen had so little influence upon the people; because the arguments by which its

principles were proved and demonstrated were too fine and subtil for vulgar apprehensions; insomuch that there were but few, in comparison, that could comprehend the strength and force of them: and in all probability, as little effect would Christianity have found in the world, had it not been proved and demonstrated by such evidence as is adapted to all capacities. As for instance, the immortality of the soul is one great principle of the Christian religion; but now, had we no other way of proving this principle than by philosophical arguments, how impossible would it have been to convince the vulgar of the truth of it? For first we must have proved that the soul is immaterial, by shewing that its operations, such as free-will and reflection, are incompetent with matter; from hence we must have inferred that it is immortal, by shewing that what is immaterial hath no quantitative extension, and consequently is incapable of division and corruption. Now, I beseech you, what jargon, what unintelligible gibberish, would this appear to vulgar understandings! What an insignificant noise would such fine speculations make in the ears of an honest ploughman! But now the miraculous resurrection of our Saviour is so plain and intelligible a proof of it, that every man may apprehend the force of it that hath the free use of his own faculties: for it is but arguing thus, and the thing is clearly proved; Christ told the world, whilst he was alive, that the soul is immortal, and that there are everlasting habitations of weal or woe prepared for her in another world; and in token that what he said was true, he promised that the third day after his death he would

rise again, which he could never have verified, had not God given him power to do it: and to be sure God would never have given him this power, had not his saying been true: wherefore, since God did empower him to rise again, it is plain that he thereby approved the truth of his saying, and justified his doctrine to the world. This is such a plain and intelligible way of arguing, that the shallowest minds may easily apprehend the force of it: wherefore, since God designed Christianity to be a religion as well for the vulgar as for the more refined and elevated understandings, it was highly reasonable that the way of proving its principles should be plain and intelligible to all capacities of men.

4. And lastly, this evidence of miracles is the most short and compendious way of proving the truth of revelation. One reason why the moral philosophy of the heathen had so little influence on the vulgar was, because their way of proving the principles of it were so long and tedious; for they were fain to prove them by parcels; and when they had convinced their auditors of the truth of one proposition, they proceeded to another; and so they were fain to prove them all singly and apart by distinct and different arguments; which was so tedious a way, that the vulgar had not leisure enough to attend to so great a variety of reasonings, nor yet capacity enough to retain them: but he that works a real miracle in token that such a doctrine is true, proves it all at once, and needs not trouble himself to demonstrate one proposition after another: for by giving a miraculous sign of the truth of such a doctrine, God doth openly approve every proposition

contained in it; because it cannot be supposed that the God of truth would approve any doctrine in the gross, if any part or proposition of it had been false, since in so doing he must necessarily have abused our understandings, and wittingly betrayed us into a false belief; which to affirm of God is equally absurd and blasphemous. When therefore God raised our Saviour from the dead, he did by that act openly avow the truth of his whole doctrine, and proclaim to all the world, that every article in it is as true as truth itself. So that now we need not trouble ourselves to hunt out for several arguments to prove the several articles of our faith; for this one argument serves instead of all, that God, by sundry miracles, and particularly by raising Jesus from the dead, hath given testimony, that the doctrine which he taught is a true revelation of his mind and will to the world. And thus you see what a clear and excellent evidence Christ's miracles, and especially his resurrection, is of the truth of his doctrine: no wonder therefore that the apostle doth so much prefer it above all other evidence, as we find he doth, 1 Cor. ii. 4. *For*, saith he, *my speech and my teaching was not with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power*; that is, I did not go about to convince ye with rhetorical harangues, or fine philosophical reasonings, but I clearly demonstrated the truth of what I preached by the miracles, which, through the power of the divine Spirit, I wrought amongst you. So that whether we consider the certainty of Christ's miracles, but especially of his resurrection, or the powerful evidence which they gave to his doctrine,

I doubt not but, upon an impartial view of the whole, it will appear, that we have all the reason in the world firmly to assent to the truth of Christianity; and consequently to this article which comprehends it all, that *Jesus Christ is the mediator between God and man.*

THE END OF THE SECOND PART.

OF

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

PART III.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

SIR GEORGE TREBY,

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE COMMON-PLEAS.

My Lord,

THOSE excellent treatises of Christian Life, which were published some years since by the learned author, have, I doubt not, in a great measure answered his design in writing them, which was to do as much good as he could to the world; and had he lived to finish the other parts of it, we might have had such a complete body of Christian institutions in our own language, as would have highly contributed towards a revival of true piety among us. For, besides those pieces which have already seen the light, it was the author's design to proceed to a particular explication of the several respective duties which men are obliged to render to God, their neighbours, and themselves; and for a conclusion of all, he proposed a distinct treatise of ecclesiastical duties.

The two discourses of Justice and Mercy, which I now present to your Lordship, were intended as a

part of that duty which we owe to one another, and which, with other enlargements, had the author lived, would have made a volume of themselves. And the discourse of Mortification is likewise a part of what he designed for the explication of that duty which man owes himself, which was also intended for another distinct volume. Besides these, he proposed a particular examination of those great duties which God requires; which, together with the other volumes, would have completed the whole design. In justice therefore to the memory of this incomparable person, I thought myself obliged to communicate to your Lordship this short account of him. The design which he proposed was great and noble; and I am sure those pieces which he hath already published do loudly speak the excellent qualifications with which God had endowed him to complete it, had not a laborious station, and, what was worse, a very sickly constitution, at last interrupted him from the prosecution of it.

As for these remains, they are faithfully transcribed from the author's manuscript; and your Lordship may easily discern that they are his true and genuine offspring by your perusal of them. I know your Lordship hath a very high value and just esteem for the memory of that great and good man, and that is a prevailing inducement to take into your protection those works which he hath left behind him. To you they address themselves; and I

doubt not, but under that character which your Lordship bears, they will be sufficiently recommended to the world: and that they may effectually promote the good of it, is the hearty prayer of

Your Lordship's
Most obedient
Humble servant,
J. GALE.

OF

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

PART III.

CHAP. I.

Of justice, as it preserves the natural rights of men; and particularly in reference to their bodies.

HAVING in a former discourse asserted and explained the nature of moral good and evil in human actions, I shall now distinctly consider the sum of all that moral duty which we owe to God and to our neighbour, as the prophet hath comprised it in these words; *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?* Micah vi. 8. I begin with that duty which God requires of us towards our neighbour; and it is all implied in the two distinct virtues of justice and mercy.

In discoursing of justice, I shall endeavour these two things: 1. To shew what that justice is which is required of us towards our neighbour. 2. To prove that it is grounded upon such immutable reasons as do render it a moral good.

1. I shall endeavour to shew what that justice is which is owing to our neighbour. In general, therefore, justice consists in giving to every one his due; in which latitude it comprehends all matter of duty:

for every duty is a due to God, or our neighbour, or ourselves; and accordingly every performance of every duty is a payment of some due; and, as such, is an act of righteousness. And therefore in scripture good men are frequently styled *righteous*, and the whole of virtue and goodness is called *righteousness*, because it is a payment of some due, either to God, ourselves, or our neighbours. But justice, being here considered as a distinct and particular virtue, must be understood in a more limited sense; viz. for honesty in all our dealings with men, or giving to every man his due with whom we have any intercourse. And wherein this consists will best appear by considering what those things are which are due from one man to another, or what those dues and rights are which men may claim by the eternal laws of righteousness. And these are twofold, 1. Natural, and, 2. Acquired.

I begin with the first, viz. The natural rights of men, which are such as appertain to men as they are reasonable creatures, and dwelling in mortal bodies, and joined to one another by their natural relations, and by society. For in all these capacities there accrue to men certain natural rights which we are obliged in justice not to violate, but so far as we can to secure and make good to one another.

First, therefore, we will consider men as dwelling in mortal bodies.

Secondly, As rational creatures.

Thirdly, As joined to one another by natural relations.

Fourthly, As naturally united in society. And I will shew what rights there are redounding to them from all these respects and considerations.

I. We will consider men as dwelling in mortal bodies, in which there is a twofold right accruing to them: 1. A right to their bodies: 2. A right to their bodily subsistence.

1. As dwelling in mortal bodies, they have a natural right to their bodies, and to all the parts of them; for their bodies being the tenements which the great Landlord of the world hath allotted to their souls during their abode in this terrestrial state, are upon that account their undoubted right; which unless they forfeit, they cannot be deprived of without manifest injury and injustice. For if God gave this body to my soul, it is certain that immediately under him my soul hath a right to it, and holding *in capite* as it doth from the supreme proprietor, is tenant at will to none but him for this its earthly habitation: so that antecedently to all human laws and constitutions, every soul is vested with a natural right to its own body; as being placed in, and put in possession of it by the God of nature; and, till by its own free act it hath alienated or forfeited its right, there is none but God (who hath reserved to himself the sovereign and absolute disposal of it) can justly either dispossess a soul of its body, or of any part or member of it; or offer any violence to the body, or put it any farther out of its soul's disposal, than God himself hath done by placing it under the outward restraints of government. So that for any one either to kill or dismember a body, whose soul hath not forfeited its right to it, to enslave or imprison a body, whose soul hath neither alienated nor forfeited its right to dispose of it, is a piece of high and crying injustice. In short, God hath placed the immortal soul of man in the tene-

ment of a mortal body, in which it hath thereupon the right of a tenant at will, that holds at the pleasure of his landlord; by whom it is empowered to enjoy it for its own habitation, to defend it against outward violence, and dispose of it for its own needs and conveniences. So that unless he be empowered by God, there is no man can rightfully destroy or dismember, or without his consent enslave or imprison, another man's body; unless it be in defence of his own life, livelihood, or liberty, which every man hath a natural right to defend. But then, since for the common good and defence of all, God hath placed his reserved authority over our bodies in the hands of human government, it is no violation of the right of our souls, for the government under which we are placed to destroy or dismember, enslave or imprison our bodies, whenever, by offending others, we render it necessary for the defence and good of all. And since the government hath, so far as the common weal requires, God's own authority over our bodies in its hands, it is no more injurious to our souls, for that to dispose of our lives and members, livelihoods and liberties, for the common security and good, than if God himself should do it immediately; since the government doth it by his right and authority, which is paramount to all the natural rights of our souls. But for any others, either to take away the life or members of another's body, except it be necessary for their own defence, or to enslave or imprison another's body, except it be upon free consent or just forfeiture, is an outrageous invasion of the natural rights of human souls.

2. As men dwell in mortal bodies, they have also

a right to their bodily subsistence. For, for God to give them a tenant's right in their mortal bodies would be very insignificant, unless we suppose he hath therewith given them some right to those outward goods that are necessary to their maintenance and subsistence: for God being the supreme proprietor of this lower world, as well as of those tenements of flesh we live in, it must needs be supposed, that, as by placing our soul in this body he hath given her a right to it, so by placing our body in this world, he hath given it a right to such a portion of this world's goods as are necessary to its repair and maintenance. And though in the unequal division of the world that now is, he hath given to some a larger share of it than to others; yet it is not to be supposed he hath so appropriated all to some, as to leave nothing for all the rest. For as all men are equal in their natural faculties and endowments, so according to original constitution they were also equal in their outward properties and possessions; and all things being promiscuously exposed to the use and enjoyment of all, every one from the common stock assumed as his own right what he needed. And as for the inequality and private interests that are now among us, they were by-blows of our fall; for it was sin that introduced our degrees and distances, that devised the names of *rich* and *poor*, begot engrossings and enclosures of things, and forged those two pestilent words *meum* and *tuum*, which have since engendered so much strife and mischief in the world. And though God hath made these enclosures rights by his long and continued permission of them, yet he hath not thereby parted with his own right to them. He by an

immutable right is still paramount of all his creation, and every thing in it unalienably belongeth to him. And as for those enclosed properties with which he hath vested us in such unequal proportions, he hath committed them to us as stewards, and not transferred them upon us as masters; and so without any injury to us may appropriate what part of them he pleaseth to what use he pleaseth; which when he hath done, we cannot without manifest injustice otherwise dispose of that appropriate part, than to the use and service for which he hath appointed it. Now out of every man's estate and property he hath actually reserved some appropriate portion to be disposed of to the poor and needy, who have nothing else to subsist by; and in this part of our estates the poor have the same right from God that we have in all the other parts of it. So that this world being now cantoned out so very unequally among men, yet according to God's allotment every man hath right to such a share of it as is at least sufficient to keep him from being starved, or pinched with extremity of need; and in this method God hath assigned to every man a child's portion, which in some fair way or other ought to be obtained, viz. either by legal right or by humble request; which latter, in conscience, ought to take effect, as well as the former. For now, according to this latter constitution, he hath appointed the rich to be his stewards and treasurers for the poor; with a strict charge that they dispense to every one *his meat in due season*. The honour of distributing is conferred on the former, as a trial of their fidelity and bounty; the right of receiving is conferred on the latter, as a trial of their patience and gratitude:

and thus God hath wisely projected, that all his children should be both effectually and quietly provided for; that one man's abundance should supply another's wants, that so there might be an *equality*, as St. Paul expresses it, 2 Cor. viii. 14. For since no man can enjoy more than he needeth, and every man ought to have so much as he needeth, there could be no great inequality among men, if things were administered according to the institution of God. But if out of our abundance we refuse to relieve the poor man's necessities, we are unjust both to God and him; to God, because we misapply his goods, and cross his orders; to him, because we wrongfully usurp, and detain from him the portion which God hath allowed him; and so, under a vizard of right and possession, we are no better than robbers in the account of God: when by refusing to relieve our brother's necessities we spoil him of his goods; his goods, I say, by the very same title that any thing is ours, even by the free donation of God. It is the hungry man's bread which we hoard up in our barns, his meat that we glut, and his drink that we guzzle; it is the naked man's apparel that we shut up in our presses, and do so exorbitantly ruffle and flaunt in; and what we deny out of our abundance to an object of real pity and charity, is in the account of God an unjust usurpation of his right. For by the institution of God, I owe every man this right; not to see him pine, and perish for want, whilst I surfeit, and swim in plenty. And thus you see what rights appertain to a man in his first capacity, viz. as inhabiting a mortal body.

CHAP. II.

Of justice in preserving the rights of men, considered as rational creatures.

II. I PROCEED in the second place to observe, that there are other rights accruing to men, as they are rational creatures: for it is this indeed that gives a right to common justice, to be governed by laws, and by rewards and punishments, that we are free and rational agents, who can choose or refuse, and determine ourselves which way soever we think fit or reasonable. For without reason and free-will, we could no more be capable of laws, nor subject to rewards and punishments, than stones or trees are. For no law can oblige a being that hath no power over his own actions; nor can he deserve to be rewarded when he doth well, nor punished when he doth evil, if it be not in his power to do otherwise: and therefore beasts cannot be said to do either justly or unjustly towards one another; because whatsoever good or evil they do one another, they do it necessarily, and it was not in their power to do otherwise. But because men are free agents, and have power to determine themselves either to do good or evil to one another; therefore of right they claim of each other the mutual performance of such goods, and forbearance of such evils, as agree or disagree with the state and condition of their natures. And hence every rational creature hath a right to be used and treated by those of his own kind agreeably to the state of his rational nature; and for one man to treat another otherwise, is not only hurtful, but also injurious. Now the rights which one rational creature may by the condition of

his nature claim of another, may be reduced to these four particulars:

First, Every man has a right to an equitable treatment from every man.

Secondly, Every man hath a right to judge for himself so far as he is capable.

Thirdly, Every man hath a right not to be forced or impelled to act contrary to the judgment of right reason.

Fourthly, Every man hath a right to be respected by every man according to the dignity of his nature.

1. Every man hath a right to an equitable treatment from every man; that is, to be treated according to the measures of that golden rule of equity prescribed by our Saviour, Matt. vii. 12. *Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets:* i. e. In all your intercourses with men, suppose you had exchanged conditions with them, and that you were in theirs, and they in yours; and be sure you do them all that good, which, upon a due consideration of the case, you could reasonably expect or desire of them, if you were in their persons and circumstances. And this right of being treated by others as they would expect to be treated by us, supposing they were in our circumstances, arises from that equality of nature that is between us, which gives every one a right to be equally treated by every one, and to claim all those good offices from others, which they might reasonably claim of him, if they were in his state and circumstances. For we being all propagated from the same loins, and partakers of the same nature,

every man in the world is by cognation of blood, and agreement of nature, every man's brother and kinsman. We are all but so many several streams issuing from one common source, but so many several twigs sprouting from the same stock: we are all of us but one blood derived through several chanels; but one substance multiplied, and dilated into several times and places, by the miraculous efficacy of the divine benediction. We are all fashioned according to the same original idea, resembling God our common Father: we are all endowed with the same faculties, inclinations, and affections; and do all conspire in the same essential ingredients of our nature: and there is nothing doth distinguish or diversify us, but what is accidental to our being; such as age and place, figure and stature, colour and garb; so that every man is not only our most lively image, but in a manner our very substance, or another ourself, under a small variation of present circumstances: which circumstances are to be considered in every application of the above-named rule of equality to our actions. If I am superior to another, either in my place or relation, or in the goods of my mind or fortune; I am only obliged by this rule to do that by him which I might reasonably desire he should do by me, were he as much my superior as I am his. But when all men naturally as such are equal, and do stand upon even terms and level ground, there ought to be no other inequality in their mutual treatment of one another, but what is owing to the inequality of their circumstances: and he who doth that to another man, which upon good reason he would not have another do to him in the same circumstances, doth unjustly

usurp a superiority over him, which neither nature nor providence allows of. For there is no proposition in the mathematics more self-evident than this, *Paria paribus conveniunt*, Equal things agree to equal persons; and therefore since we are all equal by nature, whatsoever things are due to me, must by the same reason be due to another in the same circumstances; and therefore he that denies to another man that which he conceives he might justly claim of him in the same condition, unjustly withholds from him a right that is due to him, as he is his equal in nature.

2. Every man hath a right to judge for himself so far as he is capable: for we must either suppose that every being hath a right to use its own faculties, or else that it hath its faculties in vain. For to what purpose serve its faculties, if it hath no right to make use of them? And to what purpose serveth our faculty of reason, but only to judge for ourselves in all such matters as fall within the sphere of our cognizance? which if our reason be debarred of, it stands for a lonely cipher in our natures, and is altogether useless and insignificant. And if in any thing our reason hath a right to judge for us, then much more in matters of religion, in which our highest and most important interest is concerned. So that to deny it the right of judging for us here, is to render it useless in our greatest importance, and to disable our best faculty from being serviceable to our best interest. It is true, there are sundry controversies about religious matters, which every man's reason cannot judge of; the arguments pro and con depending either upon criticisms of language, or metaphysical nicieties, or ancient histories;

which are all beyond the comprehension of persons of mean and vulgar understandings: who are therefore obliged in all such matters as these, to submit to the determination of their lawful guides and governors. But as for the great and necessary matters of religion, they are plain and obvious to the meanest understanding; and consequently herein every man ought to exercise his natural right of judging for himself, and not swallow his religion blindfold, without trying it by the test of his reason. And certainly they who remove the cognizance of religion out of the court of reason, take away that which doth most properly and naturally fall under its determination. For religion is the chief end of man's creation, as he is a reasonable being, and thereby capable of religion: and to be sure where the end is natural, the means must be so too. And therefore as horses that were made for burden have a natural ability to bear; and as birds that were made to fly have a faculty and wings for that purpose; so rational souls that were made for religion must needs be supposed to have some power naturally placed in them, for the exercise, and judgment, and choice of it. And what else can that be but their reason? So that to deny men the liberty to judge for themselves in that which is their natural end and highest interest, is as great a piece of violence and injustice as can be offered to human nature. And of this very matter the church of Rome is highly guilty; for it commands assent without evidence, and imperiously requires men to believe her doctrines without examination; to rely implicitly upon her authority, and swallow down her faith by the lump, without ever inquiring whether

it be physic or poison. For the leading principle of the Romish religion is this, that the church's authority is the reason of our faith, and that men are bound to believe what she believes without any further proof or evidence; by which tyrannical procedure she uses her wretched children as the Philistines did Samson, first puts out their eyes, and recreates herself with their blindness and ignorance. For unless they wink hard, and believe at a venture whatsoever she proposes, they are sure to feel the edges both of her spiritual and temporal swords; and though they are never so modest, peaceable, and humble in their dissents, to incur her anathemas, which have always the sting of fire and fagot in the tail of them. Now what is this but to force the opinions of men, and drive their reason from its throne of judicature: for he that punishes a man barely for his opinion, doth in so doing endeavour to rob him of his natural right of judging for himself; which is the greatest tyranny in the world, it being an exercise of dominion over the minds of men, which are subject only to the empire of God It is true, if in judging for themselves men take up opinions that are vicious, or destructive to government, their wicked practice is justly punishable according to the proportion of its malignity; for otherwise men's right of judging for themselves will soon be made a sanctuary for all the villainies in the world. And though no man ought to be punished barely for his opinion, yet he may be justly punished for practising his opinion, though his practice be indifferent in its own nature. For indifferent things, which God hath neither commanded nor forbidden, are the proper matter of all human laws; and there-

fore if, upon a false opinion that what the law enjoins is not indifferent, but sinful, I practise contrary to the law, I am justly punishable, because my mistake alters not the nature of the thing. If it be indifferent, it is a proper object of human laws, whether I think it so or no, and as such may justly be imposed; and the imposition being just in itself, our not complying with it is justly punishable. Once more: though no man ought to be punished for his opinion, yet he may be justly punishable for making a public profession of it; for there is no doubt but men may be restrained by laws from propagating their little opinions into factions, and dividing themselves upon every different persuasion into opposite parties. Otherwise it will be impossible, considering the passions of men, to maintain any unity or concord in civil or sacred societies. And therefore where such restriction is, men ought to be satisfied with this, that they freely enjoy their liberty of opining, and are not deprived of their natural right to judge for themselves; and so they ought either to keep their little opinions to themselves, or at least not to vex and disturb the public by a fierce endeavour to propagate them to others. And this due deference to men's natural right of judging for themselves hath been always punctually observed in the church of England; for it neither damns nor censures, persecutes nor destroys men upon the score of difference in opinion, provided their opinion doth not lead them to wicked or seditious practices; but hopes well of all that live well, and receives all into its communion that desire it; provided they believe but the Apostles' Creed and the doctrine of the four first general councils. It is

true, it forbids men so to profess their dissents to the articles of its doctrine and discipline, as to seduce her children from her communion, and list them into factions against her; and this every church must necessarily do, that values its own peace and preservation: but it pretends not to invade the liberty of their thoughts, or to lay rigid restraints on their opinions; and so long as they dissent from us modestly and peaceably, they may enjoy their own opinions and our communion too. And as for those foreign communities of Christians that differ from us, we pass no severe sentences against them; but do believe, and hope, and earnestly pray, that the God of all mercies will pity their errors and connive at their defects, and finally unite them to us for ever in the blissful communion of the church triumphant. Nor doth our religion obtrude itself upon the minds of men, by the bare warrant of an imperious authority; but fairly appeals to our understandings, and casts itself upon the trial of our reason; exacting of us no further assent than what the evidence claims upon which it is founded; and is so far from exacting of us a blindfold assent to it without examination, that it readily exposes itself to the severest inquiry, and asks no other favour but to stand or fall by the impartial sentence of our reason. It tells us both what we are to believe, and why; and not only allows, but requires us to examine the grounds and reasons of it; in all which there is not the least shadow of imposing on men's minds, or usurping on their rights of judging for themselves. But alas! it is not only the church of Rome that is guilty of this unnatural tyranny; for how many are there of all

parties among ourselves that cannot endure the least contradiction, but expect all judgments should bow to theirs, and receive their imperious dictates for oracles; and are ready to censure all that dissent from them, as men of reprobate minds, and to hate and persecute them, because they cannot believe as fast as they. As if no man had a right to carry his eyes in his own head but they; and their understandings were to be a rule and standard to the whole world. If another man differs from me, do not I differ as much from him? And hath not he as much right to judge for himself as I? But he is mistaken, you will say, and I am not; and possibly he is as confident that I am mistaken, and not he; and if I think I cannot be mistaken, I am more mistaken than he: but certainly it is neither presumption for him to know more than I, nor sin to know less. What then is to be done, but to leave one another in the quiet possession of each other's right; and not to hector and swagger upon every difference in opinion: because he that differs from me hath as much right to judge for himself as I, though he refuses to prostrate his understanding to mine; which for any man to expect, is a most unjust invasion of the common rights of human nature.

3. Every man hath a right not to be forced or impelled to act contrary to the judgment of right reason. For right reason is the natural guide of all reasonable creatures; it is the light of their feet, and the lantern of their paths, and the star by which they ought to direct their courses. And what can be more unjust, than to force any man to act against that which is the law of his nature? For if he who

gave me my nature, gave me right reason for the law and guide of it, I must necessarily have an undoubted right to a full and free permission to follow it; otherwise he hath given me a law in vain. And if I have a right to a full permission to follow the law of right reason, then for any man to impel me to act counter to it, either by hope or fear, or any other motive, is a high injustice to my nature. For he who induces me to do any wicked or unreasonable action, which I should not have done, had not he induced me to it, doth in so doing, so far as in him lies, not permit me to follow the eternal laws of right reason. As for instance, the law of right reason requires me, when I pretend to give evidence to any matter of fact, to testify nothing but the truth to the best of my knowledge; he therefore who endeavours, either by promises or threats, to suborn me to testify falsely, doth thereby hinder me, so far as in him lies, from hearkening to the call of right reason. Again; right reason requires me to make good my promises, whether they be to my superiors, inferiors, or equals, and much more when I confirm them with an oath; he therefore who by any means endeavours to persuade me to falsify my word or oath, doth in so doing, so far as in him lies, not permit me to follow what right reason prescribes. Once more; right reason commands me to bridle my appetite with temperance and sobriety; he therefore that by force or persuasion endeavours to make me drunk, doth, to the utmost of his power, withhold and restrain me from following that which is the law of my nature. In a word, he who by command or threat, promise or persuasion, puts me upon any sinful action, is not only guilty in the sight of God

of the sin which I commit by his inducement, but also of doing a high injustice to my nature, of putting it out of its true bias, and not permitting it to move and act according to the laws of reason; which is a piece of the most outrageous violence that can be offered to a rational creature. Besides that by inducing another man to sin, I do, as far as in me lies, betray him to eternal punishment; which is as barbarous an injustice to his soul, as the Devil himself can be guilty of. For should not I call that man a treacherous villain, who, while he pretends to embrace his friend, should secretly stab him to the heart? And is it not a much more bloody villainy, under a specious pretence of kindness and good fellowship, to stab my brother to the soul, and wound him to eternal death? But whilst, like a heedless wrestler, I thus eagerly endeavour to give my brother a fall, it is a thousand to one but I fall with him, and bear him company to eternal torment.

4. Fourthly, and lastly, every man hath a right, as he is a reasonable creature, to be respected by every man, according to the dignity of his nature. For as in particular kingdoms the king is the fountain of honour, and every man under him ought to be respected according to that rank and degree of dignity which the royal stamp hath imprinted on him; so in the universal kingdom of the world, God is the fountain of honour, and every being under him ought to be treated and respected according to the dignity of its rank, and suitably to that character of perfection which God hath imprinted on its nature. Since therefore man is so highly advanced by God in the scale of beings, as being not

only a sensitive, but a rational and immortal creature, he hath a right to be treated as such by all that are of his class and order. And for a man to treat a man otherwise, is wrongfully to depose and degrade him from that noble rank of being wherein the God of nature hath placed him. For whatsoever his outward condition may be, I ought to consider him as a man, as one that is placed in the same rank of being with myself; though he be my slave or vassal, I ought to respect him as an individual of my own kind, and not use him rudely, harshly, or contemptuously like a dog; though he be poor and mean in his outward circumstances, yet I ought to regard him as a branch that is sprung out of my own stock, and not to contemn or despise him, as if he were a creature of an inferior species; though he should be a fool or a madman, yet I ought to respect him as my brother man, i. e. endowed with the same faculties with myself, though through the unhappy defect of his bodily organs he cannot exert and exercise them; and not to scorn and deride him, as if he were an ape or a baboon, that seemed to be made on purpose to be laughed at: yea, though (which is worst of all) he should be a lewd or wicked man, yet I ought to consider him as a stem of my own root, and not abuse, disdain, or vilify him, as if he were only a two-legged brute, or an upright animal. So that there is a respect that is eternally due to human nature; wherever it is, or whatever disadvantages it is attended with, it is stamped with the image of God, and that ought to be reverenced by the whole creation. And therefore whoever uses a man inhumanly, affronts both God and his own kind, and violates the most sacred right of human nature. If

therefore we would render to men their natural right and due, we must take care not to behave ourselves rudely and insolently, superciliously and contemptuously, towards them; and we must endeavour, as much as in us lies, to accommodate ourselves to their particular tempers, and not be froward and untractable, or tenacious of our own humour, especially when it lies in another man's way; but be apt to recede and give place, that there may be room for other men's humours as well as ours. For what reason is there, that our particular humour should take up all the world? We have no more right to be morose and inflexible than other men; and should they be as unyielding as we, we must either stand at a perpetual bay, or resolve to justle with every one we meet, till we have forced all to give way, or they have forced us. For whilst we want this complaisance towards others, we are in society like irregular stones in a building, which take up more room than they fill; and, till they are polished and made even, will not permit others to lie near them. This respect therefore we owe to human nature, which is common to all men, to file off that unmanly sharpness and ruggedness of humour, which renders us perverse and untractable in our conversation; that so we may be able to compose ourselves into such respectful, courteous, and obliging deportment towards all men, as is due to the essential dignity of human nature. And thus you see what rights are accruing to men as they are rational creatures, and consequently what acts of justice, as such, they owe to one another.

CHAP. III.

Of justice in preserving the rights of men, as united together by natural relations, and as joined together in society.

III. WE will consider men as rational creatures united together by natural relations; such as parents and children, brothers and sisters, and consanguineous kindred; in which several relations they have their peculiar rights appertaining to them. Thus parents, by giving nurture and education to their children, have a natural right to be beloved and reverenced and obeyed by them; and for children to withhold these dues from them is not only a foul ingratitude, but a great injustice. They owe their parents for their lives and limbs, for the health of their bodies, and the use of their faculties; and what a small composition is there in their love and obedience for so great a debt? They borrowed their being from their parents, and therefore are their natural subjects, properties, and pensioners; and to be sure every lord hath a right to the obedience of his subject, every owner to the disposal of his property, every benefactor to the love of his pensioner; and consequently every parent, who is all these together, to all these respects and duties from their children. And so on the other hand, children have a right to be treated as children to their parents, that is, as their natural images and copies, as parts of their own substance, as *flesh of their flesh, and bone of their bones*, or as themselves derived and multiplied; which gives them a natural right to be dearly beloved and kindly treated, to be fed and clothed, instructed and provided for by their parents, according

to their power and ability: and for any parent not to render these dues and rights to his children, is not only an unnatural cruelty, but a barbarous injustice. And then for brethren and sisters and consanguineous relations, their partaking of the same blood and substance, as being coined in the same mint, and more immediately derived from the same root and fountain, gives them a natural right to be mutually beloved, and esteemed, and relieved, and assisted by one another; and they cannot be unkind, ill-natured, or hard-hearted towards one another, without breaking all the ties of nature, and being unjust violators of its sacred rights. These, in short, are the rights which accrue to men, as united together by natural relations.

IV. Fourthly, and lastly, We will consider men as rational creatures joined together in society: and because society is natural to men, and that not only as they are rational creatures, but as they were always born and bred in society; therefore whatsoever rights accrue to them from hence may be justly ranked among those rights which are natural. And men being by nature united in society with one another, there doth from thence accrue to us a right to all that is necessary to the obtaining the common benefits of society; otherwise our being united in society would be perfectly insignificant to us. Now the common benefit of society is mutual assistance, comfort, and support; to the obtaining of which these things are absolutely necessary: first, Love: secondly, Peace: thirdly, Truth: fourthly, Repute: fifthly, Protection: sixthly, Communication in the profits of intercourse. To all which every man must have a right by virtue of his being in society; other-

wise he is in society to no purpose. These things I shall but very briefly insist on, because I have handled most of them at large upon another occasion [a].

1. By virtue of our being united in society, we have a right to be beloved of one another. For being all incorporate members of one body, we naturally owe each other a mutual sympathy and fellow-feeling of each other's pains and pleasures; without which we can never be concerned as we ought to succour and relieve one another. If I partake in another's joys and sorrows, it is my interest to contribute all I am able to his happiness; but unless I am partner in his fortunes, it will be indifferent to me whether he be happy or miserable. And as it is sympathy that engages us to a mutual assistance, so it is love that engages us to a mutual sympathy: it is love that confederates our souls, and causes us to espouse one another's interests; and therefore, so far as we fall short of this, we must necessarily fall short of the end of our society, which is to aid and assist one another: which we shall never do, unless we are constantly inclined to it by a mutual benevolence. But while we hate and malign one another, our being united together in society will only furnish us with surer means and fairer opportunities to wreak our spite upon each other. So that not to love one another, while we are thus associated, is not only uncharitable, but unjust; since we thereby rob one another of one of the most necessary means to obtain the end of our society. For when men's hearts are divided, it is impossible their hands should be long united in a mutual defence and assistance; so that by withdrawing our love from each other, we do, so

[a] Vol. I.

far as in us lies, excommunicate one another from the common benefits of society; which since we have all a natural right to, is highly dishonest and injurious.

2. By virtue of our being united in society, we have a right to peace; that is, to live peaceably and quietly ourselves, so long as we do not causelessly vex and disturb others. For society being nothing but an united multitude, it is indispensably necessary to the preservation of its union, that every individual member should quietly comport himself towards every one in that degree and order wherein he is placed; because as the health of natural bodies depends upon the harmony of their parts, so doth the common good of societies or political bodies. It is peace and mutual accord which is the soul that doth both animate and unite society, and keep its parts from dispersing, and flying abroad into atoms; which nothing but force and violence can hinder them from, when once they are broken and divided. For he that cannot enjoy his peace in society, is in a worse condition than if he were out of it, and lived in some solitary desert alone by himself: for there is no solitude so dismal as a vexatious and quarrelsome society. Whilst therefore men are of an unpeaceable temper, and do affect to live like salamanders, in the fire of strife and contention, they are the common pests and nuisances of society: for wherever they dwell, they lay an embargo on all sociable communion, stop all the interchanges of good offices between men, turn all conversations into tragedies, and convert all societies into maps and images of hell, that black and dismal region of dark hatred, fiery wrath, and horrible tumult. And whereas, by the fundamental laws of society, every man hath an undoubted right not

to be disturbed in the enjoyment of his innocent pleasures, not to be hindered in the advancing his lawful profits, not to be interrupted in the prosecution of his reasonable designs, not to be detained in his afflictions, or vexed and grieved with causeless aggravations of them; it is the proper business of litigious spirits to invade and overthrow these rights, and, so far as they are able, to turn every man out of the possession and enjoyment of them. So that they are a public offence and injury to mankind; and ought to be looked upon as so many common barretors in the world. In short, every man, by virtue of his being in society, hath a right to peace, so long as he demeans himself justly and peaceably towards others: he therefore that disturbs another man's peace, unless it be in defence of his own or other men's right or peace, is an infringer of the natural rights of human society.

3. By virtue of our being united in society, we have a right to truth; that is, we have a right to know the true sense of each other's minds and intentions, whensoever we pretend to report and discover it by our speech; for it is only our speech that capacitates us for a rational society. Our words are the credentiaries and intelligencers of the society and intercourse of our minds; and it is only by these that souls do correspond and communicate their thoughts to one another: it is by these that they mutually divert their sorrows, and mingle their mirth; impart their secrets, communicate their counsels, and make mutual compacts and agreements to supply and assist each other. And indeed words are the rudders that steer all human affairs, the springs that set the wheels of actions agoing; and the hands

work, the feet walk, and all the members and all the senses act by their direction and impulse; and there is scarce any communication or intercourse among men, but what is transacted by their speech. So that if men were under no obligation to express their thoughts truly to one another, there could be no such thing as human society in the world; for it is impossible their minds should converse, while their words do falsely echo and report their thoughts. In a word, society and conversation being the great bank and exchange of souls, truth and integrity herein is the one public faith of mankind; which every man virtually engages himself to keep, by being and continuing a member of human society. For human society being a society of minds, implies in the very nature of it an universal contract and agreement to signify our minds truly to one another; and therefore, since words are the natural instruments by which this signification is made, every man, by virtue of that contract, hath a right to have the true meaning of every man's mind in his words, to have every man turn himself inside outward to him whensoever he speaks, and to measure his words by his meaning, and his meaning, so far as he is able, by the truth and reality of things. And therefore whosoever lies or equivocates to another, by laying ambushes in his words, or lurking behind them in reserved meanings, doth thereby injuriously deprive him of the natural rights of society. And therefore, by the way, whatsoever the Romish casuists may pretend, equivocation is as great an injustice as lying, as being both directed to the same end and purpose, viz. to rob those whom we speak to of their right to our meaning and intention, which

he who equivocates doth as effectually as he that lies. So that in reality an equivocating Jesuit is as great an outlaw to society as a common liar; nor can his ambiguous words be any more depended on than false ones, for the signification of his meaning; but if what he falsely or equivocally affirms to be his mind and meaning, he attests with his oath, he doth not only thereby wrong man, but horribly affront God. For an oath is a solemn invocation of God to bear witness to what we assert or promise; and therefore if what we assert be false, we call God to witness to a lie; which is to suppose either that there is no God at all, or, which is a thousand times worse, that God is as great a liar as ourselves. For he that calls God to witness what he saith, must be presumed to believe that God will witness for him, and consequently that God will witness falsely, if what he says be false; which is such a blasphemy against the God of truth, as no vengeance can sufficiently expiate. And as in the matter of assertion every man hath a right to truth, so he hath also in the matter of promise; provided he be promised nothing but what is lawful and possible. And therefore for any man to promise what he intends not to perform, or go back from his promise when he lawfully may or can perform it, is an act of unjust rapine; and I may every whit as honestly rob another of what is his without my promise, as of what I have made his by it, he having an equal right to both by the fundamental laws of society; but if he promises with an oath, as in matters of public trust and administration we usually do, he doth not only owe a just and punctual performance unto man, but to God himself, whom he calls to witness that what

he swears he intends to perform, according to the true and natural meaning of his words; and he solemnly invocates God to avenge his non-performance. So that if he fail of what he hath promised by his oath, or doth not execute it according to its true meaning, he is guilty, not only of a high injustice to man, but of a horrid profanation of the name of God; whom he hath solemnly called to witness to a lie, whose wrath he hath imprecated on his own head, and whose justice he hath obliged by a dreadful contract severely to avenge his perjury. He therefore who lies, equivocates, or forswears himself, whether it be in asserting or promising, violates that universal contract truly to signify our meaning to another, which human society implies, and upon which it is founded; and whilst he doth so, there is no intercourse can be had with him, but he is a creature by himself, an enemy to the world, that lives in a state of war with all mankind, and out of all laws and obligations of human society: and so whilst he continues in it, and pretends to observe its natural rights, he doth, by his equivocations and lies, wrong and injure all he converses with.

4. By virtue of our being united in society, we have a right to credit, and to a fair estimation among one another. For the great end of human society is, that by their mutual intercourses men might aid and assist one another; and it is for this purpose that men combine themselves into societies, that thereby they may enjoy a delightful conversation, void of fear, suspicion, and danger; and by exchanging their labours, counsels, and commodities, may be mutually helpful and beneficial to one another. And this end no man can ever attain, with-

out having a fair credit and estimation among those with whom he deals and converses. For who will trust to a man of a lost reputation? Or who would willingly have any intercourse with one whom he cannot trust and confide in? Credit is the main sinew that holds society together; and there is scarce any conversation or dealing between man and man, but what requires a mutual trust and confidence in one another. Since therefore all trust and credit is founded upon good repute, every member of our society, who hath not forfeited his good name, hath a natural right to be well reputed and spoken of; and whosoever, either by false witness, public slanders, or private whisperings, endeavours to attaint an innocent man's reputation, doth thereby injuriously attempt to exclude him from the conversation of men, and shut the door of human society against him. And this, how lightly soever it may be thought of, is one of the highest acts of injustice that one man can offer to another; for *a good name*, saith Solomon, *is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold*, Prov. xxii. 1. And indeed in its consequences it is much more so to every man; because upon his good name his ability to do good to himself, or friends, or neighbours, the success of his affairs, his best comforts, chiefest interests, and dearest conveniencies of life, yea, and sometimes his life itself depends. So that in defaming of others, we commonly rob, sometimes murder, and always injure them; and there are no damages so irreparable, no wounds so incurable, no scars so indelible, as those of a slanderous tongue. For wheresoever its venomous arrows fall, no eminency of rank, dignity of place, sacredness of office,

no innocence of life, circumspection of behaviour, benignity of nature and deportment, can protect men against them; no force can resist, no act can decline them, no vindication assoil their mischievous impressions, but still *aliquid adhærebit*, let the innocence they wound be never so well cured, some mark of dishonour will remain. Whosoever therefore either forges, or spreads, or rashly entertains a slander against any man, doth in so doing injuriously offend against the natural rights of society, and is at once a thief, a ravisher, and a murderer; a robber of the good name, a deflourer of the reputation, and a murderer of the honour of his neighbour. And yet, good God, how strangely doth this unjust and villainous practice prevail in all societies and conversations of men! among whom it is grown so common to asperse causelessly, that no man wonders at it, few dislike it, and scarce any detest it; but whilst the black-mouthed calumniator is blustering against all that stand in his way, and exhaling his poisonous breath from his venomous heart, he is heard, not only with patience, but with pleasure, and looked upon as a man of a notable talent, and judged very serviceable to the party he is engaged in. So that now this odious vice is grown a fashionable humour, a pleasing entertainment, a knack of carrying on some curious feat of policy: and so epidemical is the mischief grown, that it is dangerous for a man who hath any sense of honesty or justice to come into any conversation without being tempted to wish himself sequestered from society, and to cry out with the prophet, Jer. ix. 2, 3. *Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for*

they are an assembly of treacherous men. And they bend their tongues like a bow for lies.

5. By virtue of our being united in society, we have a right to protection from one another. For it was for this reason that God brought us forth in a state of society, and linked us to one another by the inclinations of our nature; that so we, who are singly a sort of the most defenceless creatures, whom nature hath not furnished either with the defensive or offensive armour, which is natural to other creatures, might by an union of forces be able to secure ourselves against foreign outrage and violence; and being associated for this end by the law of our nature, we are thereby obliged, so far as we are able, to defend one another. All mankind are one body, incorporated by the charter of nature, whereby every member is obliged to stand by and assist his fellow, so long as he acts as a member, and keeps within the rules of human society. Whilst therefore I do not, by offending others, offend against the charter of nature, I have a right to be defended by every man, so far as he hath power and opportunity; and whosoever offends me ought to be looked on and proceeded with as a public offender against the corporation of mankind. For the whole is concerned in every part: and as he that bruiseth the toe offends the body, and engages every member against him; so he who wrongfully hurts any member of the human society is thereby injurious to the whole, and ought to be repelled and opposed by every member of it: and he who refuses to aid his fellow-member, when injuriously struck at, and it is in his power to defend him, is a traitor to the common cause, a false-hearted turncoat and base deserter of the society of

mankind. He that can patiently sit still, and hear his brother's name torn in pieces by a slanderous tongue, when it is in his power to purge and vindicate him, robs him of the common rights of a man: he that can see his brother's life injuriously exposed, either by open violence or secret practice, when it is in his power to rescue him, treats him like an utter alien and foreigner to mankind: he that can suffer a brother to be robbed of his estate, or defrauded in his property, when it is in his power to defend and right him, unjustly withholds from him what he owes him by the charter of human society; and in so doing doth not only offend against his brother in particular, but also against the whole society of which he is a part and member. So that in short, as we are all united by the God of nature into the same corporation, we are obliged in justice manfully to defend each other's lives, estates, and reputations; and if we wilfully permit any fellow-member to be murdered, slandered, robbed, or cozened, when it is in our power to prevent it, we do not only wrongfully withhold from him his natural right to be defended by us, but foully betray the common interest of mankind; for both which we shall one day give a dear account to the supreme Head and Sovereign of all societies.

6. Sixthly and lastly, by virtue of our being united in society, we have also a right to share with one another in the profits of our commerce and intercourse. For as of all other creatures we are the best fitted for society, by reason of that peculiar faculty we have of communicating our thoughts and minds to one another; so of all other creatures we stand in the greatest need of it, by reason of our insufficiency to supply and relieve ourselves. For as

for other creatures, after they come into the world, they are much sooner able to help themselves than we; and after we are most able to help ourselves, there are a world of necessaries and conveniencies without which we cannot be happy, and with which we cannot be supplied without each other's aid and assistance. And therefore God created us in society, and imprinted sociable inclinations on our natures; that being by them combined and united together, we might be mutually helpful to one another, and ready to assist and supply each other, according to our several talents and abilities, with such necessaries and conveniencies of life as the condition of our nature requires. This therefore being one main end of our society, viz. to be dutiful ministers of God's providence towards one another, in supplying those wants and necessities which he hath made, and which he hath made to be supplied by our mutual good offices and ministries; every man hath thereupon a right to be aided and assisted by every one with whom he hath any dealing or intercourse; and to have some share of the benefit of all that exchange, traffick, or commerce, which passes between him and others. For every man hath a right to his own labour and industry; and therefore, if another be benefited by mine, it is but just and equal that I should be benefited by his; that he should so exchange labour or commodities with me, as that my necessities should be served as well as his own; and that while he reaps what I sow, and enjoys the harvest of my labour, he should repay me such a share of his, as my convenience and necessity calls for. But if he engross all the profit of our exchange and commerce to himself, he is rather a wen of the body

politic, that draws all the nourishment to himself, and starves the neighbouring parts, than a regular member, that contents itself with such a share as is proportionate to its own bulk and magnitude, and gladly permits his fellow-members to live and thrive as well as he. So that for any man, in his dealings with others, to take advantage from their necessity or ignorance, to oppress or overreach them; to use them cruelly, so as wilfully to damnify them; or hardly, so as either to rake all the advantage to himself, or not to allow them such a competent share of it as is necessary to support and maintain them according to their rank and station; is an injurious invasion of that natural right, which the very end and design of human society gives them.

And thus you see what are the natural rights of men, considered as rational creatures inhabiting mortal bodies, and united to one another by natural relations and society; all which rights are inherent in them antecedently to all human laws and constitutions; and though there had never been any other law but that of nature, yet they might have justly claimed them of one another, as eternal dues which no laws can cancel, no custom dissolve, no circumstances make void or abrogate. So that to do justly with respect to men's natural rights, is to render them what we owe them by the obligations of nature, as they are rational creatures; to treat them equitably, to do them all the good we can justly desire they should do to us, if we were in their circumstances; quietly to permit them to judge for themselves, without endeavouring to tyrannize over their minds by persecuting, censuring, and reviling them, because they are not of our opinion; to suffer

them freely to comply with the dictates of right reason, and not to put them, either by force, command, or presumption, upon any wicked and unreasonable act; in a word, to pay them all those fair respects that are due to the dignity of human nature, to treat them courteously and humanely, and not to bespeak or use them as if they were so many dogs or brute animals; these are eternal dues, which every rational creature owes to his own kind, and which we cannot withhold from one another without high injustice to human nature. But then, as we are rational creatures inhabiting these mortal bodies, we are obliged in justice not to maim, or destroy, or captivate one another's bodies; unless it be in the necessary defence of our own lives, estates, or liberties; not to deprive one another of our necessary livelihood and subsistence; but out of our abundance to supply the pinching necessities of the poor and needy. These things we owe one another as we are all the tenants of God, sent down into this lower world, and quartered in these houses of clay; and if we rob one another of what we are thus entitled to by the present state and condition of our being, we are extremely unjust to God and to each other. Again, as we are rational creatures united to each other by natural relations, we are obliged to render to each other all those respects and duties which the nature of our relation calls for; as we are parents, to love, and instruct, and make suitable provision for our children; as we are children, to love and reverence, succour and obey our parents; as we are brethren or natural kindred, to love and honour, succour and relieve one another: and if we withhold

from each other any of these rights or dues, which the nature of our relation calls for, we make an injurious inroad upon the most sacred rights and enclosures of nature. Lastly, as we are rational creatures united to one another by natural society, we owe love and peace, truth and credit, protection and participation of profit to one another. Whilst therefore we hate and malign, and vex and disturb each other; whilst we lie and equivocate, and violate our promises and oaths; whilst we refuse to defend each other's lives, estates, and reputation; and usurp all the profits of our exchange and intercourse, not allowing those whom we deal with a sufficient share to subsist and live by; we trample upon all the natural rights of human society, and demean ourselves as open enemies and outlaws to mankind.

Wherefore, in the name of God, if in this degenerate age, whereinto we are fallen, Christianity hath quite lost its just power and dominion over us; let us be honest heathens at least, though we resolve to be no longer Christians: if we will needs be deaf to the voice of our revealed religion, yet for shame let us attend to the voice of our nature, and not leap down at once from the perfection of Christians into the wretched condition of beasts and devils. Oh! for the love of God and the honour of those noble natures he hath given us, stop as men at least, though you are fallen from Christianity; and do not, by your cruelty and inhumanity, frauds and calumnies, oppressions, lies, and shameless perjuries, at the least approach towards that at which humanity starts with horror and amazement; do not defame and scandalize your natures, and render yourselves a

shame and reproach to the name of men, by these your outrageous invasions of the common rights of human nature.

CHAP. IV.

Of justice, as it preserves the acquired rights of men; and particularly those which arise from sacred and civil relations.

I PROCEED now to the second sort of human rights, which justice between man and man relates to, viz. such as are not natural to them either as rational creatures, or as dwelling in mortal bodies, or as joined to one another by natural relations, or as naturally united in society; but are acquired subsequently to the rights of nature, by that mutual intercourse which passes between men in their society with one another: which rights, though they are not natural, but accidental, are yet founded on the rights of nature, and therefore ought to be preserved as sacredly and as inviolably as these: for whatsoever rights men do acquire in the performance of the common rights of nature, are equivalent with them, as being founded on the same reasons. Now all those rights which are not natural, are acquired one of these ways: either, first, by sacred and civil relations; or, secondly, by legal possession; or, thirdly, by personal accomplishments; or, fourthly, by outward rank and quality; or, fifthly, by bargaining and compact.

I. There are some rights acquired by sacred and civil relations; and of these there are several sorts.

First, There is the relation of sovereign and subject.

Secondly, Of subordinate magistrates to the sovereign and people.

Thirdly, Of pastors and people.

Fourthly, Of husband and wife.

Fifthly, Of friend and friend.

Sixthly, Of masters and servants.

Seventhly, Of truster and trustee.

Eighthly, Of benefactor and receiver.

Ninthly, There is the relation of debtor and creditor. Of the proper rights of each of which relations I shall give as brief an account as I can.

1. There is the relation of sovereign and subject; which is the highest and most sacred of all those relations that are not natural. For God being the supreme Lord and Sovereign of the world, all lawful power and authority must be derived from him: for as in particular kingdoms the king is the fountain of authority, from whence executive power descends upon subordinate magistrates; so in the universal monarchy of the world, God is the fountain of all power and dominion, from whom all authority and right of government descends upon princes and governors; and whosoever exercises dominion in the world without divine authority, is an usurper in the kingdom of God. But then the derivation of this authority from him is either immediate or mediate; those who are supreme under him derive their authority immediately from him, and are the channels by whose mediation he derives authority to their subordinate magistrates; so that the subordinate magistrates of particular kingdoms derive their authority from God by the hands of their kings, but the kings themselves derive theirs from God's own hands immediately: and whatever the particular

form of any government be, whether it be monarchy or polyarchy, that which is supreme in it under God must be immediately from him. So far from true is that modern maxim of some Jesuited politicians, viz. that civil government is the people's creature; which by necessary consequence excludes God from being the supreme governor of the world: for if he be absolutely supreme, there is none can be supreme immediately under him, but by an authority derived immediately from him. So that the relation of sovereign hath this right unalienably appendant to it, to be accountable to none but God; from whom alone it holds its authority, and to whom alone it is subjected. And therefore for subjects to call their sovereign to account, is both to arraign God's authority and to invade his peculiar; to set ourselves down in his throne, and summon his authority before us, and require it to submit its awful head to our doom and sentence; which is as high and impious an injustice as can be offered either to God or man, and (till popery, that fardle of religious impostures, set treason and rebellion abroach) as abhorrent to all Christian principles and practices as hell is to heaven, or darkness to light. But then, since sovereigns are God's vicegerents, and do reign by his authority, they have also an inseparable right to be obeyed in all things, wherein they do not interfere with the commands of God; for in obeying them we obey God, who commands by their mouths, and wills by their laws and edicts: and as he who refuses to obey the viceroy's command, doth in so doing disobey the king himself, unless he commands the contrary; so he who disobeys his sovereign, who is God's viceroy, doth in so doing disobey God, un-

less it be where God hath countermanded him. So that while he commands only lawful things, he hath an undoubted right to be obeyed; because his commands are stamped with divine authority, and are thereby rendered sacred and inviolable. Again; since sovereigns are the supreme representatives of God's power and majesty upon earth, as being his immediate substitutes; they have also an unalienable right to be honoured and reverenced by their subjects, because they bear God's character, and do shine with the rays of his majesty; before which every creature in heaven and earth ought to bow and lie prostrate: and therefore for subjects to contemn and vilify their sovereigns, to expose their faults, and uncover their nakedness, and lampoon and libel their persons and actions, is an affront to God's own majesty, and an unjust and impious profanation of that divine character they bear about them. Once more; since sovereigns are substituted by God for the common good, to protect the innocent, and avenge the injured, and guard the rights of their people against foreign and intestine fraud and violence; they must hereupon have an undoubted right to be aided and assisted by their subjects; because without their aid it will be impossible for them to accomplish the ends of their sovereignty. And therefore for subjects to refuse to aid their sovereign with their purses or persons, when legally required, or by any indirect means to withdraw themselves from his assistance, whenever his necessities call for it, is to detain from him a just right that is owing to his character and relation. And as these rights are all implied in the relation of a sovereign, so are there others implied in the relation of

a subject; for sovereign power being ordained by God for a public good, to guard and defend the innocent, to shelter and relieve the oppressed, to fence and propagate true religion, and adjust and balance private rights and interests; every subject hath a right to be protected by it, so far as it is able, in his person and legal rights, in his just liberties and privileges, and sincere profession of true religion: and that sovereign who doth not employ his power to these purposes, but through wilful and affected error or ignorance imposes a false religion on his people, or betrays, oppresses, or enslaves them himself, or permits others to do it either out of malice or carelessness, is an injurious invader of their rights and properties; and though he be not accountable to any earthly tribunal, shall one day answer for it at the tribunal of God.

2. There is the relation of subordinate magistrates to the sovereign and people: such are the judges and justices, the governors of towns, cities, and provinces, and the like; who, by virtue of that authority which is stamped upon them, and which they derive, as I told you, from God, who is the head and spring of all power and dominion, have by virtue of that a right to be honoured, and reverenced, and obeyed by the people, according to the degree and extent of their authority. For wherever it is placed, authority is a sacred thing, as being a ray and impress of the divine majesty, and as such may justly claim honour and reverence from all men; and whoever contemns the lowest degree of it, offers an affront to the highest. He who contemns subordinate magistrates who are vested with

the king's authority, doth therein contemn the king; and he who contemns the king, who is vested with God's authority, doth therein contemn God. Whatsoever therefore the personal faults and defects of magistrates may be, men ought to consider that their authority is a sacred thing, and, as such, challenges their reverence and obedience by an unalienable right; and that therefore to behave themselves frowardly, stubbornly, or irreverently towards a lawful magistrate, is to detain from him his rights, and offer an unjust affront to his character; which, how good soever they may be in other instances, doth in this bespeak them highly dishonest and injurious. And as the relation of subordinate magistrates entitles them to the people's reverence and obedience, so the relation which the prince and people bear to them, entitles them both to their fidelity, vigilance, and justice. For subordinate magistrates are the king's trustees for himself and his people; and in their hands he deposits the honour, security, and rights of his own crown and dominion, together with the safeguard and protection of the just and legal rights of his people. So that upon their acceptance of this trust, by which they engage themselves faithfully to discharge it, the king acquires a right to their faithful and vigilant care to see that his authority be reverenced, his laws obeyed, his person, government, and properties secured; the people acquire a right to be protected by them in their persons, reputations, liberties, and estates; and so far as they are wilfully failing either towards the king or the people in any of these matters, they do unjustly detain the king's or the people's rights, or

both; they betray the trust committed to them, falsify their own engagements, and, under the mask of authority, are public robbers of mankind.

3. There is the relation of pastors and people: for since, out of his tender care to the souls of men, God hath instituted an order of men to administer to them those holy ordinances by which he conveys his grace and Spirit, to instruct them in their duties, admonish them of their errors, and warn them of their dangers, and guide them to eternal happiness; there doth from hence arise a near and sacred relation between the people and their respective guides and pastors. They are joined together by the ties and obligations of religion, which gives them a mutual right in one another; and which gives the pastor a right to be diligently attended to by the people in his religious ministrations; to be construed in the best sense, and fairly treated and complied with in all his pious reproofs and admonitions; to be honoured and reverenced for his work's sake; to partake with the people in their temporals, as they do with him in his spirituals; and to be supported by them, according to their ability, with a fair and honourable maintenance: and they who are wanting to their pastor in any of these particulars, deprive him of that which is as much his right in conscience as any thing can be theirs in law. And then as for the people, they have also a right to have holy things duly and regularly administered to them by their pastor, to be taught and instructed by him with wholesome doctrine and example, to be prudently admonished of their faults and dangers, and counselled and advised by him in all their spiritual straits and exigencies; and he who is wilfully failing in the

faithful discharge and payment of these dues is a thief and a robber of his people's souls; that so far as in him lies rifles them of that which ought to be dearer to them than their estates or lives, even *the bread of life*, without which they cannot live, but must starve and perish for ever; and if they do, it is by his unjust neglect to render them their dues, and their blood will be required at his hands.

4. There is the relation of husband and wife, who having mutually bestowed themselves upon each other, and sealed the deed by matrimonial vow, are thereby interwoven into one another, and morally compounded into one person. For marriage is an union of persons, and incorporation of two into one by moral ties and ligaments. So that between husband and wife there is the nearest and dearest union that can be between two natural persons; they are each other's property and enclosure, having by mutual vows made over and exchanged themselves for one another, by virtue of which they have a mutual right in each other's person, and cannot bestow themselves away from one another without being guilty of the most outrageous injustice. For the husband is one half of the wife, and the wife of the husband; and therefore whenever they alienate themselves from each other, they rob one another of one half of themselves. And it is this that doth so much enhance the sin of adultery beyond that of simple fornication; because when the husband disposes his body to another woman, or contrariwise, he is not only guilty of an unbounded, rambling lust, which is the proper malignity of simple fornication, but also of a foul and monstrous injustice. For he having made himself his wife's

by promise and vow, cannot give away himself from her without being impiously injurious, without robbing God of his vow, and robbing her of himself, for whom she exchanged herself. And consequently they who endeavour to seduce the wife from the husband, or the husband from the wife, are guilty of a horrid injustice, in attempting to rob God and man of that which is most dear and precious to them, and to break through vows and sacred fences to trespass on their neighbour's enclosure, which, how common soever it may be in this degenerate age, is certainly one of the blackest villainies in nature. And as husband and wife have a mutual right to each other's persons, so they have also to each other's dearest love and affection: for no relation doth so nearly entitle and interest persons in one another as that of marriage; nor consequently that gives them so great a right and title to each other's hearts and affections. Matt. xix. 5. *For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they two shall be one flesh:* and then, *No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it,* saith the apostle, exhorting to matrimonial love, Eph. v. 29. Husband and wife are one by a moral union of persons; and therefore for them to hate and abuse one another would be as unnatural as for a man to hate and tear his own flesh. Again; as they have a mutual right to each other's persons and affections, so they have also to each other's help and assistance. Hence the apostle calls them *yokefellows*, implying, that they ought to draw together, and mutually assist one another in their common concerns and interests. For in the union of their persons their interest is

combined and united; so that that which is the one's is the other's: their *meum* and *tuum* are confounded together, and their fortunes make a common stock wherein they are partners with one another, and are entitled to the promiscuous use and enjoyment of it. And being sharers in the same interest, they ought to be mutually helpful, and bear a part of each other's cares and burdens: for when they are both entitled to the same fortunes and interests, it is by no means just that the one, like a slothful drone, should dwell at ease in the hive, and devour the honey, whilst the other, like a laborious bee, goes forth, and toils to gather it. These are the common rights and dues which husband and wife owe to one another. But then the husband having the superiority, hath a right to be reverenced and obeyed by his wife in all things that are fair and honest, to be entertained with a gentle behaviour, addressed to with soft entreaties, and treated with a sweet compliance: and therefore for a woman to behave herself perversely towards her husband, to control his will in indifferent matters, and if he will not yield, to teaze and weary him with her sour looks, or clamorous words, or provoking deportment, is not only a great dishonour to her own head, but a high and shameful injustice, for which she must one day account to God, as well as for her other iniquities. And then, on the other hand, the wife being no otherwise inferior to the husband than the body is to the soul, or the bosom to the head, ought not to be treated by him as his slave and servant, but as a part of himself, i. e. with all lenity and forbearance, tenderness and complaisance; and, as Plutarch saith, "the husband's em-

" pire over the wife ought to be soft and cheerful," to be alloyed and sweetened with the greatest condescension and officiousness: and that soul is not more unrighteous to its body, that starves, or macerates, or evil entreats it, than the husband is to his wife, who behaves himself churlishly, sourly, or imperiously towards her. Col. iii. 19. *Husbands, love your wives,* saith the apostle, *and be not bitter against them:* i. e. Be not morose and rough, stern and severe in your carriage towards them; but be sure you use them with all that honourable regard, prudent compliance, and endearing familiarity, that is due to them as they are parts of yourselves.

5. There is the relation of friend and friend, which I put next to that of husband and wife, because it is next to it in respect of nearness and affinity. For friendship is the marriage of souls, and interests and counsels, the union or exchange of hearts, the clasp of mutual affections, or true love-knot that ties men's hearts and minds together. For as for the matter of friendship, it is love and charity; but as for the form of it, it is charity appropriated to such particular persons; so that charity is friendship in common, and friendship is charity enclosed. In a word, charity is friendship expanded, like the force of the sun when he rises above the horizon, and shines upon the world; but friendship is charity contracted, like the rays of that glorious light drawn into the centre of a burning-glass, and made more warm and active by their union. When therefore men have contracted particular friendships, and espoused their souls and minds to one another, there doth from thence arise a new relation between them, beyond what common charity creates; from

which new relation there accrue new rights to the related parties. For mutual friendship is not a metaphysical nothing, created merely for contemplation, for such as are contracted in its holy bands to stare upon each other's faces, and make dialogues of news and prettinesses, or to look babies in one another's eyes; but it is a substantial and important virtue, fitted for the noblest purposes, to be an alloy to our sorrows, an ease to our passions, a discharge of our oppressions, a sanctuary to our calamities, a counsellor of our doubts, a repository of our secrets, and an improvement of our meditations; a champion to our innocence, and an advocate for our interest both with God and men: to these brave purposes serves every real friendship; and without these, it is only the empty name and shadow of friendship. When therefore men combine and unite together in this close and near relation, they give each other a right to themselves to all the above-named uses and purposes, to be guides and comforts to each other in their doubts and sorrows, monitors and remembrancers in their errors and oblivions, shelters and refuges in their oppressions and calamities, and faithful trustees and secretaries to each other's confidences and thoughts. These are the great rights of friendship, which whosoever detains or withholds from his friend is a false and unjust correspondent in that brave and noble relation: for when we mutually contract particular friendship with one another, it is to these great purposes, or it is not friendship; and when to these purposes we have once joined hands, and struck particular amities with one another, we are bound by the ties of common honesty and justice, so far as we are able, to make good our

contract to all those intents and purposes it extends to.

6. There is the relation of masters and servants. For between master and servant there are mutual engagements, which are either expressed in their contract or implied in their relation; and whether there be any formal contract between them or no, their very relation is an implicit bargain, and supposes a mutual engagement to one another. By being a servant to another, I put myself into his hands and disposal, and devote my time and pains and labour to him; by virtue of which he acquires a just right to my time and service, my fidelity and cheerful obedience: and therefore if, either by gaming, loitering, or company-keeping, I alienate my time from him; or if by my sloth and idleness I rob him of my pains and labour, or by my hypocritical eyeservice, or betraying his trusts, or wasting or embezzling his goods, I deprive him of my truth and fidelity; or if, lastly, by my stubbornness and obstinacy, I purloin from him my duty and obedience, I am a dishonest and unjust servant, and, however I may escape now, must one day expect to give an account to my just and all-seeing Master in heaven. Accordingly in scripture servants are enjoined to *obey their masters in all things*, Col. iii. 22. and to *do service to them with good will*, Eph. vi. 7. to serve them with singleness of heart, not to purloin their goods, or answer them again in a froward and surly manner, Tit. ii. 9, 10. Since then they stand obliged to these duties, both by precept of scripture and the natural engagement of their relation, it is plain they cannot act contrary thereunto, without openly transgressing the laws of God, and trespass-

ing on the rights of men. And so on the other hand, by being a master to another, I stand engaged to maintain and protect him in my service, to pay him the wages, or teach him the trade for which he serves me; not to out-task his ability, nor impose any thing on him but what is tolerable and merciful; to correct him with gentleness, prudence, and mercy, and not to restrain him too rigidly from fitting and healthful recreation; and above all, to admonish him of his faults, instruct him in his duty, and give him all cheerful encouragements to well-doing. For I ought to consider, that I am master of a man of the same kind with myself, that hath a right upon that account to be treated humanely; which if I do not, instead of being a just master, I am a savage tyrant; and also I should consider that I am master of an immortal man, who upon that account hath a right to be treated religiously, that hath a soul to be saved, and an eternal interest to be secured; which if I take no care of, I treat him rather as my dog than my servant, as a beast that perishes, than as a man that is to live for ever. So that if any of these ways I am wanting to my servant, I am a transgressor of that rule of righteousness that is founded in my relation to him; and though the crying necessities of his soul and body cannot penetrate my ears, nor move my adamantine bowels to a more just and pious treatment; yet the cry of those wrongs and injuries I do him by my unjust, inhuman, and irreligious usage, will certainly penetrate the ears of God, and provoke his vengeance to a dire retribution of it.

7. There is the relation of trustees to those that trust them: for he who trusts another doth thereby

create a very near and intimate relation to him; so far forth as he trusts him, he puts his case into his hands, and deposits his interest in his disposal, and thereby creates him his proxy, or his second self. So that when I accept of the trust which another offers me, whether it be to be an arbitrator in his cause, or an executor of his will, or a guardian to his children, or a keeper of any pledge or *depositum* he commits to me, I do thereby enter into a close alliance and relation with him; I put on his person, engage to supply his place, to act as his representative, or *alter ego*, and, so far as he trusts and confides in me, to do for him as if the case were my own, to determine his cause, to execute his will, and dispose of his children, and secure his pledges to him, as if I were himself, and those were all my own. And by entering into this near relation to him, I give him a right, so far forth as he intrusts me, to my skill and care, fidelity and industry; all which, by putting on his person, I have listed and engaged in his service. So that if, by my own carelessness or neglect, I suffer any of his trusts to miscarry, I am highly dishonest and injurious to him; because I undertook to do for him all that I can suppose he would have done for himself, had he been master of my skill and ability. But if for a bribe, or to serve my interest, I betray the trust he committed to me, or convert it to my own advantage, I rob him more basely and infamously, than if I bade him stand, and demanded his purse on the highway: for then I had robbed him in the person of an enemy, but now I rob him in his own, and make use of that trust to betray his interest, by which I was as much obliged to secure and defend it, as if I had exchanged per-

sons with him, and his interest were my own: and to betray his interest for my own advantage, when he had made me his second self, and I had engaged myself to be so, is a piece of the most inhuman and disingenuous perfidiousness and injustice; because by thus doing I abuse his good opinion of me, for which I stand obliged to him, into an occasion of betraying him. So that in effect I have borrowed his person, which he freely lent me, only to rob and despoil him; and from his confidence in my truth and fidelity, by which he was justly entitled to it, have basely taken occasion to defraud him of that trust which he freely deposited in my hands and disposal.

8. There is the relation of the benefactor to the receiver. For he who doth good to another doth thereby contract a relation to him; because in doing good to him he espouses his interest, and in espousing his interest he espouses himself; he performs the part of his brother, of his father, and his God, whose highest character and eulogium is to be good and to do good; and consequently in all these capacities he stands related to him. And by virtue of this relation he acquires a right in the person obliged to be esteemed and beloved by him; to be prayed for and requited by him, whenever he hath opportunity and ability. For there is always a right acquired by benefits, where there was none antecedently: he who doth a good turn deserves and merits of him that receives it; and what he deserves, he hath a right to. So that every receiver is debtor to his benefactor; he owes him all the good he receives from him, and is always obliged to a thankful acknowledgment, and, whenever he hath opportunity,

to an equivalent requital. For though my benefactor gives me his benefit freely, as having no need of it himself, or at least not so much as I, and therefore cannot legally demand a repayment of it; yet whatsoever he gives me he deserves of me, and whenever our circumstances change, and he hath my need, and I his ability, I am in conscience as much obliged to repay it, as if he had lent it me upon bond. In this case, my ability is security for the benefit I owe him, and his need is a just demand of it; and therefore since what he hath merited of me is his due, I am extremely unjust, if, when his needs do demand it, I do not repay him so far as I am able. But if either I am not able to repay him an equivalent benefit, or he hath no need or occasion for it, I am bound in justice to express my gratitude to him in thankful remembrances and acknowledgments, to take all fair occasions to own and celebrate his goodness, and, by all the little services I can render him, to express a forward willingness to make him a full requital. For as in matter of debt, he who cannot pay all must compound, and pay so far as he is able; so in the matter of benefits, he who cannot make a complete requital, is obliged in justice to make some small composition, and pay so much in the pound as his ability extends to; and if he can do no more, to express a grateful sense of them, and give thankful words for beneficial deeds; which all generous benefactors esteem the noblest requital. But he who receives benefits without some thankful acknowledgment acts the part of a swine, that greedily devours the acorns, and never looks up towards the tree from whence they drop; and he who requites benefits with injuries acts the part of a devil, that would fain have thrown that blessed

Being out of heaven who created and placed him in it.

9. Ninthly and lastly, There is the relation of creditor and debtor: for he who lends to another man, and gives him credit either for money or commodities, or accepts of his security for what he lends to another, doth thereby contract a relation to him; by which he acquires a right to be justly repaid according to contract and agreement. For lending and crediting doth not alienate the property; the debtor hath only a right to use what he borrows for his present convenience or necessity, but the property remains in the hands of the creditor, who hath the same right to it as when it was in his own possession. And it being so, the rule of common justice obliges us, that we do not borrow more than we have a fair prospect of repaying, unless he that credits us knows our inability, and is willing to run the hazard. For he who engages himself in debt beyond what he can reasonably hope to repay, takes that from his creditor upon promise of payment, which he knows he is never likely to restore him; which is at least as high an injustice, as if he had taken it by force and violence. And the same is to be said of borrowing upon false or insufficient securities, such as bad mortgages, counterfeit pawns, or insolvent handsmen: for he who takes up his neighbour's goods or money upon such securities as he knows are incapable of repaying him, doth as manifestly wrong him, as if he had taken them by stealth or robbery. And since our debts are our creditor's rights, if we would be just debtors, we must neither reckon what we owe to be our own, nor so dispose of it, as to put it out of our power to restore it to

the true proprietor: he that hath so much of his own, and so much of other men's, ought not to spend, or give, as if it were all his own. For if he that hath borrowed one thousand pounds and is worth another, lives to the utmost height and proportion of two thousand, he must necessarily spend upon what he hath borrowed, and put it out of his power to restore it; and in so doing rob and despoil his creditor, to maintain himself in his prodigality. And as debtors ought to be careful so to dispose of what they owe, as that they may be able to repay it; so they ought to be no less careful to repay it upon due demand, or according to contract and agreement. For as it is unjust to deprive a creditor of his money, so it is unjust to deprive him of the use and possession of it, any longer than he consents and agrees to it; because as he hath right to his money, so he hath right to possess and use it. And therefore for debtors to defer and protract their payments without their creditors' consent, when it is in their power to discharge them, to put them upon fruitless attendances, and make advantages of their money against their consent, and beyond their contracts and agreements, is a degree of injustice next to that of robbing and despoiling them of it; because by thus doing, they do not only force their creditors to waste their time in tedious attendances, and take them off from their other businesses, but also rob them of the use and possession of their money, which they have as much right to as to the money itself. And if to defer payment be so unrighteous in a debtor, then to refuse and deny it, or take indirect courses either to abate or avoid it, is much more unrighteous; because this is not only to

deprive a creditor of the present use and possession of his property, but of his property too: and how can that man call any thing he possesses his own right and property, whilst he thus denies another his? So that by an indispensable rule of justice every debtor is obliged rather to strip himself of all, and cast himself naked on the providence of God, than, by denying his debts, or indirectly shifting the payment of them, to feather his nest with the spoils of his neighbour. When therefore by refusing to pay what we owe, we force our creditors upon costly or troublesome suits to recover their own; or by pleading protections, or sheltering ourselves in a prison, we avoid being forced to it by law; or by fraudulent breakings, we necessitate them to compound our debts, and accept a part for the whole; whichsoever of these ways we take, I say, to deprive our creditors of their rights, we are inexcusably dishonest and unrighteous. And though by these or such like knavish evasions we may force them to acquit and discharge us, yet we cannot force God, in whose book of accounts our debts are recorded, as well as in theirs; and it concerns us sadly to consider, that there is nothing can cross or cancel them there, but only a full restitution; and that if they are not cancelled there, all the tricks and evasions in the world will never be able to secure us from a dismal reckoning, and a more dismal execution.

And thus you see what those acquired rights are, which are due from man to man upon account of their civil and sacred relations.

CHAP. V.

Of justice, as it preserves the rights of men acquired by legal possession.

II. THERE are other rights acquired by legal possession. For when there was but one man, he was lord and proprietor of all this lower world; but when he had propagated a family from his loins, and that family was by degrees branched into several tribes, he sent forth these tribes under the conduct of their heads, fathers, and princes, to go and take possession of such and such portions of his earth, as their numbers, necessities, and conveniences required; which when they had done, the prince and father of each tribe divided his land among the members of it, and shared it into particular properties, proportionable to the merit or number of the particular families contained in it; and when any of these tribes became too numerous and burdensome to the land that was thus divided among them, they sent forth colonies from among themselves to take possession of the next unpeopled country bordering upon them; which when they had done, the leader of the colony divided it among his followers; and so as they increased and multiplied, they spread themselves from country to country, till they had shared the world into nations, and divided the nations into distinct and particular properties and families. And this division was the original law, by which each family claimed as its property the share that was allotted to it: and since the father of mankind was entitled by God, who is the supreme proprietor, to all this terrestrial globe, he had an undoubted right to divide it among the

several tribes that descended from him: and therefore since he empowered the heads and princes of his tribes to take possession of such and such portions, and divide it among their families; not only each particular tribe had an undoubted right to the portion allotted to it by him that was head of them all, but each particular family had an undoubted right to the share that was allotted to it by him that was the head of the tribe it belonged to. And thus you see the first division of the world among men was the great law of property; and that whatsoever men were possessed of by it, they had an undoubted right and title to; and upon this law all the *meums* and *tuums*, the particular rights and properties that are now in the world, are founded. For though in process of time not only the tribes and colonies encroached upon one another, till the stronger, by swallowing up the weaker, grew into kingdoms and empires; but even the particular families also of these tribes and colonies encroached upon each other, and either by fraud or oppression robbed their neighbours of their original share; so that those rights and properties which were made by the primitive divisions seem for the most part, if not altogether extinguished; yet it is to be considered that the laws now extant do suppose all alienations of property from the first owners to have been made according to that original law of division; which law did not so unalienably entail on those tribes and families their appropriate shares, but that they might either sell or give them away, or forfeit them; and if either of these ways those shares have passed through all successive generations till now, from tribe to tribe, or family to family,

the present possessors are justly entitled to them by that original law of division. And that they have thus passed, all laws now extant do suppose. The law of nations supposes those countries that are held by right of conquest to have been justly forfeited to the conqueror; and that unless they are so, his conquest is robbery, and not right. The municipal laws of countries do suppose the estates of particular families to be held by the right of donation or purchase from the true proprietor, and that unless they are so, their first possession was a theft and not a right: and therefore neither the law of nations nor the law of countries do allow either conquerors or families to be rightful possessors of their conquests and estates, so long as there appears any just claim against them. But though the first possession should be obtained either by unjust conquest or by fraud and oppression, yet if it continue in the lineage or family of the unjust possessor till all just claim against it be extinguished, the law must suppose it to be obtained justly, because there appears no evidence to the contrary. And indeed when a dominion or an estate, which was at first unjustly obtained, hath been so long successively possessed, as that no man can produce a just claim and title to it, it must be either the present possessor's or nobody's. But then when God, who is the supreme proprietor of all, doth by his providential permission continue an ill-got possession till all lawful claim to it is worn out, he doth thereby entitle the present possessor to it, and creates it his right and property. For though God's providence can be no rule against his revealed will, nor consequently can authorize any

man to possess what another hath a just claim to, because his revealed will forbids it, yet it is to be considered, that when no man can justly claim what I possess, I wrong no man in possessing it, and consequently am in no wise forbidden it by God's revealed will: and therefore, in this case, by his providential continuance of the inheritance of it to me, he gives me free leave to possess it; and that leave is an implicit conveyance of a just right and title to it. So that legal possession, when there is no just or legal claim against it, is an undoubted right, a right founded on the free donation of God, who is the supreme proprietor of all things: and therefore justice obliges us not to rob or deprive men of what they are entitled to by law, nor to despoil any man by stealth, or strip him by violence, or defraud him by craft and cunning insinuation of any right or property to which the law entitles him; because by thus doing, we do not only wrong man of that right which by legal conveyance he derives from God, but we also wrong God himself, by presuming to alienate his bequests, and to reverse and cancel his donations. For he who by stealth, or robbery, or fraud, deprives another of his property, doth impiously invade God's right of bestowing his own where he pleases, and refuses to stand to that division and allotment which his providence hath made in his own world: he doth in effect declare in his actions that God hath nothing to do to share his world among his creatures, that he will not endure him to reign Lord and Master in his own family of beings, nor allow his providence to carve and distribute his own bread and meat among his children; but that

he will snatch from every one's trencher, and carve what he pleases for himself out of every man's commons and allowance. So that to deprive another, you see, of what he is legally possessed of, is a high and crying injustice against God and men: for he that will needs have more of God's goods than God hath given him is an impious robber of God; and he that will needs have those goods of God which he hath given to another must be an unjust robber of man. If therefore we have injuriously deprived another of his legal rights, we are bound, by all the ties of religion towards God, and of honesty towards men, to make what restitution we are able: for it is certain that my wrongful seizure of what is another man's doth not alienate his right to it; so that he hath the same right to it while I keep it from him, as he had at first when I took it from him; and consequently, till I restore it to him, I persist to wrong him of it; and my detaining it is a continued repetition of that fraud, or theft, or oppression, by which I wrongfully seized it. And whilst I thus persist in the sin, the guilt of it abides upon me; and I am justly responsible to the tribunal of heaven for being a robber of God and men. Whilst therefore I unjustly detain what is another's right, I keep the earnest-penny which the Devil gave me to entitle him to my soul for ever; and so long as I possess the spoils of my injured brother, I maintain so many evidences to give testimony against me, and to raise a cry on me as high as the tribunal of God.

CHAP. VI.

Of justice, in reference to the rights acquired by personal endowments or outward rank.

III. THERE are other rights acquired by personal accomplishments, such as wisdom and learning, integrity and courage, generosity and goodness, which do naturally render men exceeding useful and beneficial to the world; and therefore by these men do acquire a just right to be highly esteemed and honoured by all that know them. For praise and honour are the natural dues, the birthright and patrimony of excellency; which by its own inherent merit challenges esteem and veneration. He who excels another hath a right to be preferred before him in the esteem and value of the world; to have his light reflected with a more glorious splendour, and his excellencies resounded with higher eulogiums. Now the excellency of a man consists in the graces and ornaments of his mind: and as we do not esteem a ship to be excellent because it is curiously carved and inlaid, but because it is exactly fitted to all the purposes of navigation; as we do not account a sword to be excellent because it hath a rich hilt or embroidered scabbard, but because it hath a keen edge, a sharp point, or a good guard and temper: so none but fools will esteem a man to be excellent, because he hath a great estate, or a comely body, or wears fine clothes and rich trappings, but because he hath a brave and a goodly mind, a soul well adorned with intellectual or moral accomplishments. These are the glories of the man; whereas all the rest are only the embellishments of his case and outside. So that the true stamp of

nobility is upon the minds of men; and consists in those graces of understanding and will, whereby we represent and resemble God, who is the pattern of excellency and the fountain of honour. So that true honour is nothing else but a due acknowledgment of the excellencies of men's minds and wills, or their own intellectual or moral accomplishments echoed and reverberated upon them in just acknowledgments and commendations; which to withhold from one that truly deserves them is great injustice and dishonesty. For he who detains from a worthy person those honourable acknowledgments that are due to his virtues, robs virtue itself of one of the fairest jewels in her diadem, and that is her honour and glory; he strips and despoils her of her garments of praise, steals from her her native rays and lustre, and buries her alive in darkness and obscurity: and therefore since to rob a virtuous person of his honour and reputation is so great an outrage to virtue itself, it must needs be highly unjust and dishonest. And herein consists the great iniquity of detraction, and of lessening or debasing men's deserved praises and commendations; which is a higher injustice than to pick their purses: for he that clips or embases a man's honour, robs him of his best and dearest property; and whilst he sucks the veins of another's reputation to put colour into the cheeks of his own, he lives upon the spoils of his neighbour, and is every whit as injurious to him, as if he should pull down his house about his ears to build himself another in its ruins. And yet how common is this unrighteous practice among men! How doth this grovelling serpent lurk almost in every hedge, to snap at the heel of every nobler creature that passes

by! Insomuch that a man can hardly mention in any company another man's excellencies, but presently some little viper or other will be perking up to sting and spit poison at him; and if he can say nothing against him, yet something he will seem to know; and with a crafty nod and shrug, a malicious smile or sneer, suppress and conceal it; and if he chance to speak of another, what care doth he take to stifle what may commend, and blazon what may shame and disgrace him! Like the envious panther, that shadows in dusky colours all the graceful parts and features, but carefully exposes the spots and blemishes to open view. These and a thousand other tricks of detraction are frequently practised in all conversations; but certainly did men but consider what a villainous injustice this is, and how much it provokes God, who will one day make a strict inquisition for men's good names, as well as for their blood, they would never dare to allow themselves in such a crying injustice towards one another.

IV. There are other rights acquired by outward rank and quality, whether it be in respect of titular dignity, or of wealth and large possessions; by both which men do acquire a right to civil respect and outward obeisance. For as for the several degrees of nobility, titles, and places of dignity, by which men are advanced above the vulgar class into the upper form of mankind, they are so many marks and badges of honour, by which the king, who is the fountain of honour, and who, by smiling on a clod of earth, can, with the April sun, prefer it into a gay flower, doth raise and ennoble men, advance them into a higher orb, a more illustrious rank and

station in the world. Now, though by virtue of this titular dignity we are no farther obliged to reverence or esteem men than their wisdom or virtue deserves, yet are we bound to give them their due titles, and demean ourselves towards them with that outward preference, observance, and ceremony, which their degree and quality requires; otherwise we rob them of those rights which the king, who is master of outward respects and precedencies, hath bestowed upon them. For the royal stamp upon any kind of metal gives it an extrinsic value, and determines the rate at which it is to pass among coins; though it cannot raise its intrinsic worth, nor make that which is but brass to be gold. And as titular dignities entitle men to an outward respect and observance, so also doth wealth and large possessions: for these are badges of honour as well as the other, only the other we receive from the king, but these from the King of kings. For when God bestows upon one man a larger fortune and possessions than on another, he doth thereby prefer and advance him into a higher sphere and condition; and when God hath set him above us, it is just and fit that we should rise and give place to him. And though a wise or virtuous poor man hath more right to our esteem than a fortunate knave or fool, who in all his glory is but a beast of burden in rich trapping and caparisons; yet, forasmuch as in outward rank and condition God hath preferred the latter, he hath the right of precedency and of outward respect and observances, and ought to be treated with greater obeisance and regard.

CHAP. VII.

Of justice, in reference to the rights acquired by compact.

V. FIFTHLY and lastly, There are other rights acquired by bargaining and compact: for compacts being a mutual transferring of rights, wherein the person with whom I bargain makes over such a commodity to me for so much money or other valuable thing, the right whereof I make over to him, we mutually owe this right to one another, to deal truly and honestly in making, and sincerely and faithfully in discharging our compacts and mutual engagements with each other. For since the end of commerce, and buying and selling, is mutually to assist and furnish one another with the necessaries and conveniencies of life, both buyer and seller must thence have a right accruing to them so to buy and sell, as that they may be mutually assisted by one another; as that the buyer may have the worth of his price, and the seller the worth of his commodity: for otherwise, instead of mutually assisting, the one must necessarily depress and damnify the other. What the exact measure is, which in matter of buying and selling ought to be observed between man and man, is, I confess, a difficult question, and hardly capable of being nicely determined, especially by us who are so little acquainted with the affairs of the world, the necessities of things, and the particular and hidden reasons of some sorts of traffick and dealing: and therefore, that I may not venture beyond my depth in the determination of this matter, I shall only prescribe such general rules of righteousness to conduct our bargains and con-

tracts, as being impartially applied to particular cases, may secure men from dealing wrongfully and injuriously with one another. And they are these: First, Use plainness and simplicity in all your dealings. Secondly, Impose upon no man's ignorance or unskilfulness. Thirdly, Take no advantage of another's necessities. Fourthly, Substract not from the commodity or price for which you have contracted. Fifthly, Go not to the utmost verge of what thou conceivest to be lawful. Sixthly, In doubtful cases choose the safest part.

1. Use plainness and simplicity in all your dealings. Do not, by disparaging another man's commodity, or over-valuing your own, endeavour to draw on an advantageous bargain; neither ask far beyond, nor bid much below the worth of commodities. Say not, you cannot take less or give more, when you know you may with fair advantage and profit. Pretend not what is false, cover not what is true; but, so far as in you lies, fit your affirmations and denials to the understanding of the person you deal with; and do not lie in ambush behind your words to trap and ensnare him. For in bargains not only that which is false is unjust, but also that which deceives.

2. Impose upon no man's ignorance or unskilfulness. Whilst you keep within the latitude of lawful gain, you may use your skill against another man in driving a bargain: for in an ordinary plenty of commodities there is an ordinary price, which those that deal in them know and understand; and when the contractors equally understand the price, there can be no deception or injustice on either side. But if he whom I contract with be ignorant or un-

skilful, I must not rate his want of understanding, or set a tax upon his ignorance, but use him not only justly but ingenuously, as one that reposes a trust in me, and casts himself upon my equity; considering that to take advantage from his simplicity to abuse and defraud him, would be not only injustice, but inhumanity.

3. Take no advantage of another's necessities. Do not wring and squeeze a poor man when he is driven to your doors by his wants, and forced to sell his wares to supply his necessities; but give him the same price you would have done, supposing he wanted your money no more than you need his commodity. And if the poor man be forced to buy of you upon trust, increase your price no higher than what is necessary to make you recompence for the loss, which according to the rules of trade you must sustain by your forbearance; reckoning in also the hazards you run, which ought to be charitably and prudently estimated. For he who makes advantage of another's necessities, robs the spital, and adds oppression to misery; which is not only injustice, but barbarity.

4. Substract not from the commodity or price for which you have contracted. For he who buys a commodity by weight or measure hath a right to as much of it as the common standard allows him; to have a full standard pound, or pint, or bushel, according as he bargains or contracts, and to substract any thing from what he hath bargained for, whether it be by false weights or measures, or by falsely weighing or measuring, is no better than theft and robbery. And so on the other hand, he who sells a commodity hath a right to the money for which he

sold it; and therefore for the buyer either knowingly to pay him uncurrent coin, or forcibly to detain from him any part of the price agreed on, is a manifest violation of the eternal rules of righteousness.

5. Go not to the utmost verge of what you conceive to be lawful; for he who goes to the utmost of what is lawful ventures to the brink of a precipice, where he stands in imminent danger of falling into it. For it is a short and easy passage from the utmost limit of what is lawful to the nearmost of what is sinful. So that he that will go as far as he may, will never be able to avoid going sometimes farther than he should; especially when he is led on by interest, and hath a tempting prospect of advantage before him, which is wont to blind the eyes of men, to warp their judgment, to tincture their minds with false colours and undue apprehensions of things. Wherefore in that latitude of lawful gain which is allowed you, use favour towards the poor and necessitous, ingenuity towards the ignorant and unskilful, and moderation towards all.

6. Sixthly and lastly, In doubtful cases choose the safest part: for not only a good, but a quiet conscience is to be valued above the greatest gain; and that man hath but little regard of his conscience, that will venture to expose it to a wound to get a shilling more in a bargain. Wherefore if we would be safe, we must make this a constant rule of action, in matters of duty to do the most, in matters of privilege and divisions of right, or proportions of gain, in all doubtful cases, to choose the least; which to be sure is always the safest. For if in buying and selling I make any advantage which I doubt is unlawful, I stake my conscience at a lottery, and

throw cross and pile whether I shall be guilty or innocent: and thus to play and dally with my innocence is but one degree of presumption from being wilfully guilty.

These are the general rules by which we ought to conduct ourselves in our compacts and bargains, if we mean to avoid that crying sin of defrauding and overreaching one another; which how crafty and politic soever it may seem to men that do not regard the issue and event of things, it will in the end be found to be one of the greatest and most unprofitable follies. For alas! while I am overreaching my brother in his estate, there is an invisible cheat at my elbow that is chousing me out of my heaven and my soul! So that in fine, the whole scene of knavery resolves into this; the Devil is angling with a less fish to catch a greater, baiting his hook with my brother's property, that so, when I have taken and devoured that, he may take and devour me. And so I have done with the first thing proposed in handling this great and comprehensive duty of justice, or honesty between man and man; which was, to shew what it is, and how far it is extended.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the eternal reasons of justice.

I PROCEED, in the next place, to shew what those eternal and immutable reasons are which render justice morally good. I have elsewhere shewed at large, that that which makes a thing morally good is this, that its obligation is founded in some eternal and immutable reasons: so that we are obliged to

practise it by such reasons as can never cease or change, or alter with times or circumstances. And that this is the difference between positive and moral duties, that the one are founded upon temporary and changeable reasons, and so may and will one time or other cease to oblige us; as the sacrifices of the Jews have done, and the sacraments of Christians will do; whereas the other, being backed with everlasting reasons, can never cease to oblige us. Wherefore, to demonstrate justice to be a moral duty, or one of those moral goods which God hath made known to us, it will be necessary to produce some eternal and unchangeable reasons whereby it binds and obliges us; and of such I shall produce these four:

First, The eternal proportion and congruity of justice to the nature of things.

Secondly, The eternal conformity of it to the nature of God.

Thirdly, The eternal correspondency of it with the divine Providence and disposals.

Fourthly, The eternal necessity of it to the happiness of men.

I. One eternal reason, by which we stand obliged to do justly, is the eternal proportion and congruity of justice to the nature of things. For there are in nature eternal respects of things to things, which are as fixed and unalterable as the nature of the things themselves: as for instance, some things are naturally more perfect than others, such as the superior kinds and orders of beings; others are naturally equal in perfection, such as the individuals of the same kind of beings; others are naturally less perfect, such as the inferior ranks and species of

beings: and since nature hath thus ranked and placed things either above, or below, or equal to one another, every being in the world must naturally respect every one either as it is superior or inferior or equal: and these respects are as inseparable to their nature, as those degrees of perfection are which constitute their kinds and orders. So that were all the beings in the world rational, and understood but their mutual respects and relations to one another, they would thereby be obliged to demean themselves towards each other suitably to that rank and form of being wherein nature hath placed them; and by their actions to acknowledge themselves superior, or inferior, or equal to one another, according as they excel, or equal, or come short of one another in degrees of natural perfection. And herein consists the strict and proper notion of doing justly, viz. in treating my superiors, inferiors, and equals as such, in respecting my equals equally, and my superiors and inferiors according to the degree of superiority and inferiority wherein they are placed. So that justice consists in acting congruously to those eternal respects which things bear to one another; or in a practical acknowledgment that the beings above me, below me, and equal to me, do bear such a respect to me as they really do; that they are just so much my superiors, so much my inferiors, or so much my equals, as God and nature hath made them. For among beings that are capable of understanding those respects and relations they bear to one another, it is a natural due that they should own one another to be what they are, and mutually signify by their actions and behaviour what respects and relations they bear to one another; that by re-

verence and submission they should own those above them to be their superiors; that by grace and condescension they should own those beneath them to be their inferiors; and that by equity or equality of usage and behaviour, they should own those who are level with them to be their peers and equals. These are the natural expressions of our acknowledgment of those mutual respects and relations we bear to one another, which not to acknowledge, is in effect to deny one another to be what we are, to thrust one another out of our places, and invade each other's rights and peculiars. So that, in short, justice is nothing else but the great balance of the rational world, which weighs out to every part of it what is due from every one in those respective ranks and relations wherein God and nature hath placed them; and so long as there remains any proportion of nearness or distance, of superiority, or inferiority, or equality, among rational beings, that will be a firm and unanswerable reason why they should deal justly and righteously towards one another; because dealing justly is nothing else but a practical owning and acknowledgment of these respects and relations; which so long as they continue, every being must be obliged to acknowledge, that hath any capacity to know and understand them. For since God hath given me reason to understand that all those beings which are of my own kind and order are my equals by nature, I cannot but conclude that they ought to be equally dealt with; since equal things must necessarily belong to equal beings in the same circumstances. And from this principle whereon that golden rule is founded, *to do as we would be done by*, all the particular instances of justice between

man and man are naturally derived. So that the obligations of justice, you see, do immediately grow out of the nature of things, and those respects and relations they bear to one another: and therefore till the nature of things be utterly unravelled, and their respects to one another for ever cancelled and reversed, every rational being must be obliged to be just; that is, to acknowledge, so far as he understands it, the respect and relation he bears to all other beings; by demeaning himself submissively towards his superiors, equally towards his equals, and condescendingly towards his inferiors. And whatsoever we are obliged to by the nature of things, we are obliged to by the author of nature; whose works are as real signs and expressions of his will, as his revealed declarations. And therefore since he framed and constituted us with such respects and relations to one another, that is as plain a signification that it is his will we should demean ourselves accordingly, as if he had proclaimed it by a voice of thunder from the battlements of heaven. Since therefore God hath thus engraven the obligations of justice upon the nature of things, they must abide for ever, and be as eternal as those respects and relations are which things bear to one another.

II. Another eternal reason by which we are obliged to do justly, is the conformity of it to the nature of God. For justice is one of the brightest jewels of God's diadem, one of those most glorious attributes which do eternally crown and adorn his nature, and determine his will, and direct his actions. *Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints,* Rev. xv. 3. *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments,* Psalm cxix. 137. *Are not my ways*

equal? and are not your ways unequal? saith God himself, appealing to the consciences of his subjects, in Ezek. xviii. 29. Consonantly to all which is the assertion of Plato, Θεὸς οὐδαμῇ οὐδαμῶς ἄδικος, ἀλλ' ὡς οἷόν τε δικαιότατος· "God cannot be said to be unjust "in any respect whatsoever, but is in all kinds just "to the utmost possibility." And indeed the eternal self-sufficiency of his own nature sets him above all manner of temptation to deal injuriously by his creatures. He wants none of their rights to enrich himself, needs none of their happiness to augment his own; which is so boundless and secure, that it can neither admit of any increase, or be liable to any diminution. What then should move him either to deprive his creatures of any good that is their due, or to inflict on them any evil that they have not deserved, when he can serve no end of his own, nor reap any advantage to himself by it? For all injustice springs out of want and indigence; which being utterly excluded from the nature of God, it is impossible there should be any unjust inclination or tendency in him. And as by the infinite self-sufficiency of his nature he is secured from all temptation to injustice, so by the infinite goodness of it he stands invariably bent and inclined to deal justly and righteously by his creatures. For goodness is nothing but an inclination of nature to bestow more good than is due, and inflict less evil than is deserved; which inclination being inseparable to the nature of God, it is impossible for him either to withhold from us any right, or to punish us wrongfully, without doing violence to himself, and committing an outrage on his own nature. So that the nature of God is a law of righteousness to himself,

right to as I am a man, I have a right to from God who made me a man; and therefore he who denies me the right of my nature, thrusts me down from the form wherein God hath placed me, and uses me as if I were not what God hath made me; whereby he doth in effect fly in the face of my Creator, and quarrel with God for making me what I am. In a word, it is eternally reasonable, that I, who am the creature of God, should pay so much reverence to his all-creating wisdom and power, as to treat every creature suitably to the state and condition of its creation; and consequently to treat men as men, that is, as beings endowed by God with the common rights of human nature; which if I do not, I alienate from my own kind what God hath endowed it with, and so in effect do disallow of his endowments, and impiously call in question the rights of his creation. For either I must own that God ought not to have constituted human nature with such rights, which would be to impeach his creation, or that I ought to render it those rights which result from its frame and constitution; and therefore, when by my actions I disown that I ought to render them, I do in effect quarrel with God's creation for entailing such rights upon human nature, and declare that I am resolved not to be concluded by it; but that I will for ever defy the laws of the creation, and will not abide by that rule and order which it hath established in the nature of things. If therefore it be reasonable, eternally reasonable, for creatures to act agreeably to the order of their creation, this is an eternal reason why we should render to one another those rights which God hath bequeathed to us by the constitution of our natures.

And as our natural rights are derived to us from God by his creation, so are our acquired also derived from him by his providence, who, having reserved to himself the sovereign disposal of all our affairs, is our founder and benefactor, upon whom we all depend for every right and property we acquire by our conversation and intercourse with one another; and that this is mine, and that yours, is owing to the providence of God, which carves out to every one his portion of right, and divides as he sees fit his world among his creatures. So that justice, as it refers to acquired rights, consists in allowing every man to enjoy what God hath given him by his all-disposing providence: and if God hath an eternal right to share his own goods among his own creatures as he pleases, then that is an eternal reason why we should allow one another to enjoy those portions which he hath shared and divided to us For by depriving another man of what God's providence hath given him, I do not only rob him of his right to enjoy it, but I also rob God of his right to dispose it. For while I withhold or take away what God hath given to another, I take his goods against his leave, and impiously invade his province of bestowing his own where he pleases: and whilst I thus carve for myself out of those allowances which he hath carved to others, I live in open rebellion against his providence, and am an outlaw to his government. For this in effect is the sense and meaning of my wrongful encroachments upon other men's rights, that I will not be concluded by that division and allotment of things which God hath made, but that I will divide and carve for myself, and live at my own allowance; that I will not suffer him to share his own world,

nor endure him to reign lord and master in his own family of beings, but even live as I list, and take what I can catch without asking God's leave, who is the supreme proprietor and disposer. So that to deal unjustly by men, whether it be in respect of their natural or acquired rights, is a direct opposition to the divine ordination and disposal; and therefore if it be eternally reasonable for us, who are God's creatures and subjects, to comply with the order of his creation and the disposals of his providence, that is an eternal reason why we should deal justly with one another.

IV. Fourthly, and lastly, Another eternal reason why we are obliged to do justly, is the everlasting necessity of it to the happiness of men: for justice is the pillar and support of all society, without which it is impossible for rational beings ever to live happily with one another. For while I deal unjustly by others, I draw all men into a combination against me; who having all the same tender sense of their own interest and happiness as I have of mine, must be sufficiently jealous of all designs and encroachments on their rights and properties; and consequently be ready to conclude from my injustice towards one, that I am prepared to do mischief to many for the advancement of my own ends: so that when once I am remarked for a person that bears no regard to right and wrong, it becomes the joint and equal interest of all to declare open war against me, and treat me as an open enemy without mercy and compassion. So that one unjust man in a society is a common disturbance to all the rest; for by every single injury he doth, he alarms the jealousy of every man, every man having reason to conclude that he

shall be served by him in the same kind, if he should happen to fall into the same circumstances. And as he disturbs others, so he cannot securely enjoy himself; for how can that man be secure that acts as an enemy to mankind, and for that reason hath just cause to suspect that every man is his enemy who is conscious to his injurious behaviour? the fear of which must necessarily deprive him of all satisfaction for the present, and of all security for the future. So that unjust persons are a plague to themselves and others; and like frighted porcupines they are disturbed within, whilst they dart their quills at all without them. What a dark rude chaos then would this reasonable world be, should justice and righteousness forsake it; should rapine and violence, falsehood and oppression, reign, and the strongest arm be sole arbitrator of right and wrong; should all promises and professions be converted into traps and snares; and every man lay ambushes in his words, and lurk behind them in reserved meanings, only to wait an opportunity to surprise and ruin every one he converses with! What would the consequence of this be, but the disbanding of all society, and the converting of this human world into a den of wolves and cannibals! For by reason of men's continued experience of each other's falsehood and insincerity, all mutual trust and confidence would be banished from among them; and every one would be forced to stand upon his guard in a constant expectation of mischief from every one; and so all their intercourse would consist in a trade of diabolical knaveries, in doing and retaliating injuries, and in circumventing and playing the devils with one another. Which would be such a dreadful state of things, that I ve-

rily believe, were it left to my option, I should rather choose to languish out an eternity in some dismal dungeon alone, and there converse only with my own silent griefs, than to dwell for ever in the garden of the world, accompanied with such false and villainous creatures. But now, do but turn the other end of the perspective, and imagine that you saw *judgment running down like water, and righteousness as a mighty stream;* that you beheld a world of upright people, balancing all their actions and intercourses in the impartial scale of justice, and mutually weighing to one another their natural and acquired rights without any respect or partiality, the superiors graciously condescending, the inferiors cheerfully submitting, and the equals dealing equally with one another! O good God! what a blessed and happy people would this be! With what content and satisfaction, peace and mutual security would they deal and converse with one another! Here would be no quarrels or contentions, no jealousies or suspicions, no dark designs or false pretences; but every one would converse with every one with the greatest openness and freedom, and all would be inviolably safe in each other's sincerity and justice: here would be no justling or rencountering, no clashing or interfering of interests; but every one would sit happy and contented under his own vine, without any unjust desire of trespassing on his neighbour's enclosure, or disquieting fear of being ejected from his own. O! were I but an inhabitant of such a world as this, though of the lowest rank and form, how should I despise and pity the most prosperous circumstances of this unrighteous world we live in! and how loath should I be to change

my world for any other, but that of angels and of glorified spirits! O justice, justice, would men but call thee down from heaven again, and permit thee to rule and govern their actions, into what a blessed world wouldst thou convert this stage of rapine, cruelty, and blood! How wouldst thou separate this dark chaos, and distinguish its confusions into order and beauty! How soon wouldst thou reform it into an emblem of heaven, or lively figure of that celestial ether, where all is harmony, and light, and peace, and love, and happiness! If therefore it be eternally reasonable that men should study their own happiness, that is an everlasting reason why they should deal justly by one another; since without so doing it is for ever impossible for them to be happy. These are the eternal and immutable reasons, which constitute justice a moral good, and do eternally oblige us to deal justly by one another.

And now what remains, but that we betake ourselves to the conscientious practice of this great and comprehensive virtue, to give to every man what is due to him either by constitution or by just acquisition; to deal with every man with whom we have any intercourse, as with a rational creature; to treat him equitably, and do him all that good which we might reasonably expect from him, if we were placed in his circumstances; to allow him the liberty to judge for himself, so far as he is capable, and not endeavour to impose our opinions upon him by violent and forcible means; to leave him at liberty to follow the dictates of right reason, and not seek to debauch him by persuasion or threatenings into immoral and vicious courses; to treat him humanely and suitably to the dignity of his nature, and not

use him like a dog, or as if he were an animal of an inferior species? For all those things are due to him as he is a rational creature, and cannot be denied to him without high injustice. Again; to deal with him as he is a rational creature placed by God in a mortal body; and neither to ravish his body to satisfy our lust, nor to maim or destroy it, unless it be in our own defence; nor to captivate and enslave it, unless it be upon free consent, or upon just forfeiture; nor to suffer it to perish for want of bodily sustenance, so long as it is in our power to support and relieve it. These things he hath a claim to, as he is the tenant of God, and cannot be denied without foul injustice. Once more; to use him as a rational creature united to me by natural relations: if he be my father, to honour and reverence and obey him; if he be my child, to love and instruct him, maintain and provide for him; if my brother or sister or consanguineous relation, to cherish and advise, support and assist him according to my ability. These are the dues of natural relation, and cannot be withheld without great unrighteousness. Lastly, to treat him as one whom God and nature hath united to me in the bands of human society, to love him, and live peaceably with him, to speak truth to him, and, when I am lawfully called, to swear nothing but truth concerning him, and perform my promises and oaths to him, so far as it is lawful and possible; not to blast his reputation, but to defend his person, good name, and estate, so far as I am able, and to allow him a competent share of all those profits which accrue to me from my dealing and intercourse with him. These are the natural dues which justice requires me to render him, and

which I cannot withhold from him without being injurious to the human nature within him. And as I am obliged in justice to render to every one his natural dues, so I am no less obliged by it to render him his acquired ones; to render him whatsoever is due to him upon the account of any sacred or civil relation to me; not to intrench upon his legal possessions either by fraud or violence; to render him those honours and respects which are owing to his personal accomplishments, or to his outward rank and quality; and not to defraud, oppress, or overreach him in his contracts and bargains with me. These are the particulars, as I have shewed you at large, to which this comprehensive virtue extends itself; and oh that now, having seen upon what everlasting reasons it is built, we would be persuaded to betake ourselves to the serious practice of it.

CHAP. IX.

Of the sinfulness and unreasonableness of injustice.

AFTER the explication of the immutable reasons and grounds of justice, it may be proper to add some motives and considerations against injustice.

And first, consider the great repugnancy of injustice to the terms and conditions of the Christian religion. I know there are some people that look upon honesty and justice as one of the beggarly elements of religion, a sort of heathen virtue belonging to carnal and mere moral men, that are utterly unacquainted with the spirit and power of godliness:

and accordingly in the room of this and such like moral virtues, they have foisted in a sort of spiritual religion as they call it; which consists in a certain model of conversion and regeneration, that is made up of nothing but a mere fanciful train of dejections and triumphs, that are most commonly either the effects of a distempered blood, or the unaccountable freaks of an overheated fancy: and if they find they have been converted *secundum artem*, i. e. that they have undergone those frightful, sorrowful, or joyous passions, which this stated method of regeneration includes, all their after-religion is nothing else but a leaning and rolling on Jesus Christ. And whilst they should be governing their wills, their tongues, and their actions by the eternal rules of justice and goodness, they are employed, as they think, in a higher dispensation; in forming odd schemes of spiritual experiences, and attending to the inward whispers, and incomes, and withdrawings of the Spirit of God; all which are commonly nothing but only the effects of a melancholy fancy tinctured with religious fears, and flushed with a natural enthusiasm. But whatever it be, it is doubtless a dangerous mistake for men to take up with any religion, which doth not principally insist upon the eternal laws of morality: and though justice or honesty in our dealings with men will never singly recommend us to God, unless it be conjoined with mercy, sobriety, and godliness; yea, though all these together will never recommend us to God, unless their imperfections be purged and expiated by the all-sufficient merit of our blessed Saviour; yet without justice and honesty all our religion is a damnable cheat; and all the merit of our Saviour will be as insignificant to us, as it is to the

devils or damned ghosts. For his merit is no refuge for religious knaves, his wounds no sanctuary for spiritual cheats, or liars, or oppressors: and for such persons as these to shelter themselves in our Saviour's propitiation, is to profane and desecrate it; and thereby to cause those vocal wounds to accuse them, which were made to plead for them; and to provoke that eloquent blood to cry aloud for vengeance against them, which in its native language *speaketh far better things than the blood of Abel*, Heb. xii. 24. For justice is a duty of that indispensable necessity, that God will not, yea, to speak with reverence, cannot dispense with it: and so far was our Saviour from ever designing to obtain a dispensation from it, that the great end of his dying to obtain our pardon for our past unrighteousness, was to encourage and oblige us to live more justly and righteously for the future. For so the apostle tells us, Tit. ii. 14. *That he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works:* and notwithstanding all that he hath done for us, he hath plainly assured us by his apostles, that no unrighteous person shall *inherit the kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. vi. 9. and that the *unjust shall be reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished*, 2 Pet. ii. 9. that *the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of men*, Rom. i. 18. and *that they all shall be damned that take pleasure in unrighteousness*, 2 Thess. ii. 12. And if these things be so, then as ever you hope to enter into the kingdom of God, to escape his unquenchable wrath, to hold up your heads at his tribunal, and not to be condemned to everlasting horror and confusion; be

persuaded to *fly from all unrighteousness*, and use all honest care to deal justly and righteously with all men.

II. Consider the great vanity or desperateness of injustice: for if the wrong and injustice you do to another man be such as is repairable, you must resolve to repair it, or to perish for ever. For he who doth not repair an injury when he is able, doth every moment continue and repeat it: and though the first injurious act were transient, and did expire and die in the commission, yet because it leaves a permament evil behind it upon the good name or estate of my neighbour, I am as much obliged, if I am able, to remove the evil from him, as I was at first not to bring it upon him; and all the while I neglect to remove it, I wilfully continue the evil upon him, and in so doing continue wilfully injurious to him. As for instance, when I wilfully asperse another man's reputation, my sin dies not with my slanderous breath, but survives in the evil effects of it; and till I have endeavoured to purge his stained reputation, and to restore him his good name again by a fair and ingenuous vindication, I am a slanderer still, and accountable for all those hard thoughts and injurious words which I have occasioned others to think or speak against him. Again; when I rob or defraud another man of his estate, or any part of it, the sin doth not cease with the transient act of stealth, or cozenage, or violence, which ends and expires in the commission; but continues so long as the damage and evil effect of it remains: whilst therefore he suffers in his estate by my injurious act, and it is in my power to repair it, I continue injuring him; and till I have made him all the re-

stitution I am able, I am a cheat, or a thief, or a robber. Since therefore injustice is a damnable sin, as I shewed you before, it necessarily follows, that whenever a man deals unjustly by another, he must at the same time either resolve to undo his own act, or to run the hazard of being undone for ever; the former of which is a ridiculous vanity, and the latter a desperate madness. For what a vanity is it, for a man to do what he resolves to undo, to slander with a purpose to vindicate, and cheat with a resolution to refund; that is, to do an evil thing with a purpose to be never the better for it? If you resolve to restore what you wrongfully take from another, why do you take it? Is it so cheap a matter to be wicked, that you should covet to be wicked for nothing? that you should contract a guilt which will bind you over to eternal punishment, with an intention to part with all that temporary gain which tempted and invited you to it? What is this but to weave a Penelope's web, to do and undo, and build castles of cards, to blow them down again; and, which is more vain and nonsensical, to swallow deadly poison for our health and ease, which we know will rack and convulse us, with a purpose to vomit it up again, without gaining either health or ease by it! For he who wrongs another with a purpose to make him restitution, doth an evil action with an intent to get nothing but guilt by it. You say, you intend to restore to him what you wrong him of; and if so, for what end do you wrong him, unless it be to render yourself more criminal and guilty? for when you have restored to him what you have wrongfully deprived him of, what can remain to you but only the guilt of a wrongful and injurious action? So that

for men to deal unjustly by others, with an intent to make them restitution, is the greatest vanity and nonsense in the world; but then to do it without such an intent is the most desperate madness. For since every wilful act of injustice binds men over to eternal punishment, and since nothing but restitution, so far as they are able, can release and absolve them from that dire obligation, it necessarily follows, that he who deals unjustly by others without any intent of making them restitution, doth by his own act wilfully oblige himself to endure an eternal punishment. For he knows that what he gains unjustly from another must be restored, or his soul must be lost; and therefore, if he resolve upon that gain without any intent to restore it, he doth in effect stake his soul to it, and freely oblige himself to endure hell-fire for ever, in consideration of the present gain he acquires by his unjust dealing. For he who knows that such a potion, however sweetened and made palatable, is compounded with the juice of deadly nightshade, and yet wilfully swallows it without any intent to disgorge it again, doth thereby voluntarily murder and destroy himself: and so he who knows that such an unjust gain, how tempting soever it may look for the present, hath an everlasting horror and anguish intermingled with it, and yet wilfully seizes it, without any intent to refund it, doth freely consent to undergo the evil to enjoy the good of it, and shake hands upon this desperate bargain, that upon condition he may reap such an unlawful profit, he will freely surrender up his immortal soul to the pangs and agonies of eternal death. For in every temptation to deal unjustly the Devil cheapens our immortal soul, and the un-

lawful gain with which he tempts us is the price he bids for it: and though sometimes he bids exceeding low, yet if we take his price, though it be but a penny, we thereby strike the fatal bargain, and by our own act and deed consign and deliver our souls to him to be his slaves here and his martyrs hereafter. And what greater madness can a man be guilty of, than to sell his soul and all his hopes of happiness for ever, for the trifling and momentary gains of an unjust action?

III. Consider the manifest inexcusableness of injustice in itself: for, as I have shewed you at large, all justice between man and man is reducible to that general rule, *Do as you would be done by;* i. e. Do all that good to others which you could reasonably expect they should do to you, if you were in their circumstances, and they in yours: and this is so plain a rule, that no man can plead ignorance of it, who doth not wilfully shut his own eyes. It is true, whilst laws, though never so plain and useful in themselves, are yet obscure and perplexed in their promulgation, or over-numerous, they may prove a snare rather than a guide, and make more controversies than they can decide, and lose much of their force by being spun out into nice and subtile disputes: they may fall short of their aim, by not being able to reach the greater part of those persons whom they designed to direct; who either have not leisure sufficient to attend to, or capacities to understand them, or sagacity to apply them in all opportunities of action. But as for this general rule of justice, it is always at hand, and we carry it about us in our own breasts: for this is the peculiar advantage of this rule, that by it we may very easily dis-

cern all the specialities of our duty, without looking abroad, or having recourse to external instructions. So that by it we may be perfect lawgivers, skilful judges, and faithful casuists to our own souls: for it is legible to those that have no letters, and lies open and obvious to the most rude and ignorant. We need not search ancient records or dark repositories, revolve and ruminate upon old sentences or new glosses, or rove about the world to examine the various customs and constitutions of countries; we need not soar to heaven or dive to hell in quest of our duty: for if we will but return into ourselves, and look into our own hearts, there we may find it copied and engraven in legible characters. For when any opportunity of dealing justly by another presents itself to us, it is but asking ourselves how we would be dealt by in the same circumstances; and our answer to that is our duty to those we deal with. I know very well how I should expect to be used, if my neighbour and I had changed persons and circumstances: my own heart tells me, that I should think it reasonable to expect such measures from him, and that therefore he hath just reason to expect the same from me. So that in most cases of justice between man and man, every man, if he pleases, may be his own casuist: for it is but exchanging persons and circumstances with his neighbour, which is quickly done, and then applying this general rule to his particular dealings with him; and his own heart will soon tell him what he is to do, and very rarely, but never grossly, misinform him. For by thus changing the scales, and making another man's case my own, I take the fairest and readiest way to understand what is right and due to

him. For now to be sure my passion and self-interest will not incline me one way more than another; and even that selfishness which inclines me to wrong another man for my own advantage, will likewise render me unwilling, when the scales are changed, that another man should wrong me; and that self-conceit, which makes me apt to scorn and despise another, will make me unwilling to be scorned and despised myself: and so, when I consult myself how I would be dealt by, those very passions which incline me to wrong others will instruct me to right them. So that there is no rule in the world can be pressed with fewer encumbrances, or darkened with less intricacy; none that can lie open to larger use, or be readier to present application, or more obvious to all sizes of apprehension than this, which is the measure and standard of our dealings and intercourses with one another. So that there is no pleading ignorance to excuse or palliate any great violations of the laws of righteousness; since in all matters of moment every man may easily understand how he ought to deal by every man, if he would but take care to consult the oracle in his own breast, and ask himself how he would expect to be dealt by, were he placed in the circumstances of those he deals with. And when men will not understand their duty, when it lies so plainly before them, or will not do their duty, when they do understand it, what colour of excuse can be made for them? Were the rule of our duty so obscure as that we could not easily apprehend it, the weakness of our understanding might partly excuse the error of our wills, and render it pitiable and pardonable, though not altogether innocent; but when it lies so

full in our view, as that we cannot but discern it, if we will but open our eyes, and fairly consult our own minds and thoughts, our understanding is acquitted, and our will only is chargeable with our folly and wickedness: so that now we sin at our own peril, and leap headlong into mischief with our eyes open. But as for injustice, the guilt of it is so open and visible, that however our other sins may be excused by our ignorance, and mitigated or connived at upon the score of the natural defects of our understanding, this can admit of no cloak or extenuation; because whenever a man deals unjustly by another, his conscience will be sure to tell him (if he puts the question to it) that he would not be so dealt with, were the case and circumstances his own. So that when we come to give up our accounts at the tribunal of God, and to answer for our unrighteous dealings with one another, they will so stare us in the face, that we shall be able to make no excuse or apology for them; but our own consciences will be forced to cry Guilty, Guilty, to anticipate our doom, and, when it is past, to approve and second it with a *Just and righteous art thou, O Lord, in all thy ways.* For when the rule of justice lies so very plain, and open to our very faculties, what can be said, if we do unjustly, but that we are obstinate and wilful and incorrigible robbers, that can claim no indulgence, deserve no pity, and pretend to no mitigation of our stripes, since we knew our Master's will, and did it not?

IV. Consider the fruitlessness and mischievousness of unjust dealing to ourselves. For the usual bait of injustice is gain and profit; we deplume our neighbour's wings with an intent to feather our own

nests, and invade other men's properties to enrich ourselves with their spoils. This is the common game that fraud and oppression pursues and flies at; though usually they fly short or beyond it, and instead of enriching men, do finally damage and impoverish them. For how successful soever unjust dealing may sometimes prove to the raising a man's fortune and estate, it is in its natural tendency an effectual way to impair and ruin it, because by dealing unjustly he makes it every man's interest to forsake and abandon him, and in effect sets a cross upon his own door, to warn all customers from entering. For who would willingly have to do with a knave, that always lies upon the catch, waiting opportunities to rook and cozen him; with whom he can neither speak nor act securely, but must be forced to stand upon his own guard with him, and treat him with the same circumspection and cautiousness as conjurers do their devils, for fear of being snapped and torn in pieces by him? And how is it possible for a man to thrive, when nobody cares to deal with him; when his house is haunted, and his frauds and cozenages appear like spectres at his door, to frighten all men from his shop and conversation? And accordingly you see that justice and honesty in dealing is so absolutely necessary to men's thriving in the world, that even they who are not honest are fain to seem so: but for a man to seem to be honest, there is no way so certain and secure, as to be really so; for if he be not, it is a thousand to one but the events of things will one time or other unmask and discover him. No man can be secure of privacy in an unjust action, but let him carry it never so secretly and demurely, one accident or

other will draw the curtain, and bring to light the fraud and villainy behind it: and when it doth, what will men say? "He has cheated me once, and "that was his fault; but if he cheat me again, it will "be mine as well as his: and I shall richly deserve "the second wrong, if I will take no warning by "the first." So that how much soever a man may gain by a present cheat, he is sure, if he be discovered, to lose his correspondent, by whom in a few years he might have honestly gotten ten times more: besides that, either his resentment of the injury he hath received, or else his charity to others, will oblige him to divulge the knavery, and to warn others by it not to have any thing to do with the detected knave that wronged and abused him. And when once a man's credit is blasted by the report of a foul and dishonest action, it is a thousand to one but he will lose back in his trade all that he gained by his cheat, and twenty times more; and then, if once he begin to sink, there is no recovering of him: for estate and credit are the two wings that bear men up in the world; and therefore if, when he hath clipped the wings of his credit, his estate should fail him too, he must decline and sink without remedy. For credit is like a looking-glass, which, when only sullied by an unwholesome breath, may be wiped clean again; but if once it is cracked, it is never to be repaired. So that considering all, fraud and injustice is as great an error in politics as in morals, and doth bespeak a man to have as little wit as honesty, and, in plain English, to be as much a fool as a knave. But suppose the best, and that which sometimes happens, that a man should thrive by his fraud and injustice, and grow great and pros-

perous in the world; alas! what comfort can he take in his ill-gotten wealth, when every part of it throws guilt in his face, and awakens some dire reflection in his conscience? For, as I shewed you before, of all sins, that of injustice admits the least excuse and mitigation; the sense of it clings so close to a man's conscience, that he can never pluck it off, without pulling away his conscience with it, and rooting out of his mind all the sense of religion, and of good and evil. So that unless the man turn an assured atheist, or a stupid sot, it will be impossible for him to enjoy his unjust possessions, without great recoilings and convulsions of conscience, because his unjust possessions will, like the adulterer's bastard, be a standing reproach to him, and a perpetual remembrancer of his guilt and shame. And when that which a man enjoys and lives upon, when the meat which he gluts, and the drink which he guzzles, the clothes which he rustles and flaunts in, shall thus reproach and upbraid him, O wretched man! we are the price of thy innocence, thy soul, and thy eternal happiness; for us thou hast damned thyself, and freely consigned thy immortal spirit to everlasting horror and confusion; when his bags and coffers cry Guilty, Guilty, and he sees a *Mene tekel* on the walls of every room in his house, and every thing he enjoys whispers some accusation against him, what comfort can he take in the purchase of his frauds and oppressions? Were it not a thousand times better for him to have lived contentedly on a brown morsel, than thus to fare deliciously every day with a vexed and a tormented mind? And yet this is commonly the fate of unjust possessors, who, under the disguise of a cheerful countenance, too

commonly wear woful hearts, and, like tragedies bound in gilded covers, are only gay and splendid without, but full of stabs and wounds within. But suppose that in a continued tumult of excesses and riots they should make a shift, whilst they live, to drown the cries of their guilty consciences, yet in all probability, whenever death threatens or approaches them in a disease, and sets them within ken of eternity, their conscience, in despite of them, will rouse and awake, and raise a hideous outcry against them: for now their last will and testament will set before them a woful catalogue of uncancelled guilts, and every ill-gotten penny they have there bequeathed will put them in mind of their approaching damnation, and dictate dread and horror to their consciences, which in a desperate rage will fly in their faces, and tell them to their teeth that they are cheats and knaves and reprobates; that their legacies are the fruits of their sins, the purchase of their frauds and oppressions; and that for that which they are now bequeathing to others, they have long ago bequeathed their soul to the Devil, who now stands ready to seize on it, and carry it away to those dark prisons of horror, where he keeps his miserable slaves under a dreadful expectation of their eternal judgment. So that should any man chance to thrive and grow rich by injustice, yet it is a thousand to one but either living or dying, or both, his riches will prove a far worse plague to him than poverty itself: and if so, who but a madman would ever abandon himself to a folly so fruitless and mischievous?

Fifthly and lastly, consider the high provocation that injustice gives to God. For God, as I have

shewed you before, is the author of all those rights which men are invested with, whether they be natural or acquired: and being the author of them, he is more especially obliged to assert and vindicate them, to maintain his own bequests and donations, and not suffer those to go unpunished who presume to purloin or alienate them from their rightful owners. For he who wrongfully deprives a man of any right, deprives him of what God hath given him, snatches God's goods out of those hands in which he hath trusted and deposited them; and in so doing robs God himself, and seizes his goods without his leave. So that every unjust invasion of another's rights is an injury to God, who is the supreme proprietor, from whom all right and property descends. For since every man's right is derived from and founded on the right of God, whosoever trespasses on the one must necessarily invade the other. All that is ours we hold by tenant-right from the great Landlord of the world, whose supreme and independent propriety is the ground and foundation on which all our just claims and properties depend. He therefore who by fraud or violence dispossesses any tenant of God, or seizes any part of the property which he hath farmed out to him, doth in so doing eject the Landlord as well as the tenant, and, so far as in him lies, turn God out of his own world, and usurp his eternal right and dominion. And so long as he holds what God hath set to another, he holds not as a tenant of God, but as a robber and an invader of him. When he seized his unjust possession, he snatched God's goods out of his hands; and while he detains them, he doth in effect declare that he will keep God's

goods in despite of him; that as he hath already thrust him out of this part of his creation, so he is resolved to keep him out as long as he is able, and never to permit him to reenter upon it, so long as he can maintain and defend it against him. Since therefore we claim by God's own tenure, and all our rights do finally issue and resolve into his, he is peculiarly concerned to assert and vindicate them, because they are all his own. Hence is that passage quoted by St. Paul from God's own mouth, *Vengeance is mine, and I will repay it*, Rom. xii. 19. For what is vengeance, but only a retribution of punishments for wrongs and injuries received? And therefore since all rights are God's, and consequently all wrongs do redound upon him, vengeance, or retribution of wrongs, must necessarily be his right and prerogative; and it being his, he will be sure to repay it one time or other: and though he may defer it a while out of wise and gracious ends, yet in the long run it will appear that his forbearance is no payment, and the longer he is repaying the principal, the greater sum the interest of his vengeance will at last amount to. For what higher outrage can you do to God, who is an immortal Being, infinitely removed from all passion and suffering, than to break in upon him, as you do by every act of injustice, and despoil him of his goods, and rifle his house before his face; to turn him out of doors, as it were, and shut up his own creation against him; and in effect to tell him, that from henceforth you are resolved to be your own God, to live at his allowance no longer, but to carve and divide for yourselves; and that so far as you are concerned, he shall have no more to do in his own world, but that

you will supply his place in his family, and order his affairs, and dispose of his goods, as you think convenient? Which is such an intolerable indignity as cannot but kindle a resentment in the most indulgent nature, and arm even an infinite patience with thunderbolts. And accordingly, if you consult either sacred or profane history, you will find that there is no one sin which God hath so remarkably punished in this world, as this of injustice between man and man. For this he hath been observed to plague not only the unjust persons themselves with such judgments as have echoed and resounded their crimes, but hath many times entailed a curse upon their posterity; which, like a flying scourge, hath pursued them generation after generation, and marked their descendants with dire events, like a coat of arms, charged with crosses and croslets. For this he hath pursued whole nations to utter ruin and desolation; and it was for this that he cut off his own people the Jews, and converted his beloved Sharon into an eternal desert. And if his vengeance thus smoke against injustice in this life, which is the school of discipline, how will it burn against it in the other, which is the stage of execution! If the posterity of the unjust be thus racked for it upon earth, how will the unjust themselves roar for it in hell! In a word, if these temporary flashes and eruptions of God's vengeance against unrighteousness be so dreadful, how terribly must it flame against it within the bottomless volcanoes of everlasting burnings! Wherefore, as you would not provoke an infinite vengeance, which you can neither withstand nor endure, it concerns you diligently to avoid all unrighteousness in your dealings and inter-

course with men; which if you take care to do, and to add to your justice mercy, to your mercy sobriety, and to your sobriety walking humbly with God, you shall be sure, not only to escape his vengeance both here and hereafter, but also from these seeds of holiness to reap everlasting life.

CHAP. I.

Of mercy, as it relieves the miseries of the soul.

AFTER the consideration of justice, that of mercy is to follow: and the proper object of mercy being misery, it will be requisite, in order to the explaining of this virtue, to consider what those human miseries are which it relates to, and what are the particular acts of mercy which belong to them. Now the miseries which men are liable to in this life are reducible to these heads: first, either they are such as do affect their souls; or, secondly, such as do affect their bodies.

I. The miseries which do affect the souls of men; which may all be comprehended under these five heads: 1. Sorrow and dejection of mind. 2. Errors and mistakes in matters of lesser importance. 3. Blindness and ignorance in things of the greatest moment. 4. Malice and obstinacy of will in destructive and mischievous courses. 5. Impotency, or want of power to free and recover themselves of them.

1. One of the miseries which affect men's souls is sorrow and dejection of mind, which, like a consumption in the body, preys upon the soul, dispirits

its faculties, and renders them faint and languid in all their operations. *By sorrow of the heart,* saith Solomon, *the spirit is broken,* Prov. xv. 13. And indeed sorrow is that sense of the soul by which it feels and perceives its own miseries, and without which it could no more be affected with calamitous things, than iron is with the blows of the hammer. This is the sting by which all sad accidents do wound and inflame our spirits, and with which the least trifle in the world can make us miserable in the most prosperous state, and turn all our enjoyments into wormwood. Sorrow therefore and dejection of mind being the point and edge of all our miseries, is upon that account a most proper object of mercy; whose peculiar province it is to ease and relieve the miserable. Whensoever therefore we do converse with the sorrowful and dejected, the law of mercy requires us to do what we can to support and relieve them; and that first by sympathising with them, by sharing their griefs, condoling their sorrows, and pitying their calamities, or, as the apostle expresses it, Rom. xii. 15. *by weeping with those that weep;* which upon the first breaking out of great sorrow is the properest remedy we can administer. For when a passion is in its rage and fury, it is no more to be pacified with reason and discourse, than the northern wind is with a lecture of consolation; and till it hath tired itself a while with the transports of its own rage, to endeavour to check it with arguments would be as vain an attempt, as to dam up the cataracts of Nile with a hurdle; which, instead of suppressing their violence, would but cause them to roar the louder, and to swell and break forth into more impetuous torrents.

The best course therefore that can be taken at present is to humour and gratify the passion by condoling with it the calamity which caused it. For as the fiercest creatures are most easily tamed by gentle management, by soothing and stroking, and being kindly treated; so the best expedient to mitigate violent sorrows is to soothe and indulge them, till their violence is abated; to conform ourselves to them, and mingle our tears and lamentations with them. And accordingly we find that to be pitied and condoled is a real ease and comfort to the miserable; and that so far as we partake with other men's griefs, we do translate them out of their breasts into our own: so that by sympathising with them, we take part of their sorrows from them; which, like dimensions, may be so divided by us, as to become at least insensible, if not indivisible. Wherefore, since it is not the tears of their own eyes only, but of their friends' eyes too, that do exhaust the current of their griefs; which falling into many streams will run more peaceably, and by degrees contract themselves into narrower channels; it is an act of mercy that we owe to the sorrowful to condole and sympathise with them in their afflictions. And not to do so, or, instead of that, to be either insensible of their sorrows, or to take no other notice of them, but to mock at and deride them, is a certain argument of a cruel and barbarous temper. And as we ought to sympathise with them in their sorrows, so, when they are capable of it, we are obliged by the laws of mercy to use our best endeavour to support and comfort them under their heaviness, as the apostle exhorts, 2 Cor. i. 4. sometimes by lessening and extenuating their affliction,

sometimes by applying to them the consolations of religion, sometimes by representing to them the evil of immoderate sorrow, and sometimes by diverting them with innocent pleasantry and cheerfulness. For sorrow diverts the mind from all comfortable thoughts, and, like a black perspective-glass, represents all objects mournfully and tragically: so that unless others will have mercy on it, and thrust comforts into its mouth, it will have no mercy on itself, but sit pining and languishing under incessant grief and discontentedness. Wherefore, to cheer and comfort dejected and sorrowful minds is both a great and a necessary act of mercy; as on the contrary, for any man causelessly to afflict and grieve another, to add weight to his sorrows, and wormwood to his gall, and take pleasure in his griefs and vexations, is not only inhuman, but diabolical: for to rejoice in the afflictions, and recreate with the sorrows of the miserable, is the blackest character that can be given to a devil.

2. Another of the miseries which affect men's souls is the errors and mistakes they are liable to in matters of less importance. The understandings of men are naturally weak and shortsighted, apt to be imposed upon by shows of truth, and to swallow lies for realities, when they are gilded with a fair probability: and though we make loud boasts of certainty and demonstration, yet God knows many times our certainties are the dictates of our wild imaginations, and our demonstrations prove nothing but our own confidence. For prejudice, error, and inadvertency are as incident to our minds, as diseases are to our bodies; and there are certain springs and principles in all men's understandings, which do

render them liable to be turned about by strange and unaccountable impulses. And generally our affections are apt to creep into and mingle with our arguings, so that in most of our disputes the argument on both sides is commonly lost, and the controversy determines in a conflict of affections. And in a word, the generality of men are unalterably determined in their opinions by their fear or their hope, or their prejudices, or the prepossessions of their educations; which, like so many whirlpools, having once sucked a man in, do most commonly keep his head under water, and never permit him to emerge and recover himself: and if the prejudices of our education happen to be false, in all our reasonings from them we do only spin out one error from another, and so our thoughts wander in a labyrinth, wherein the farther we go, the more we lose ourselves. And as our understandings are very dim-sighted, so the paths wherein we seek after truth are commonly very obscure and intricate: for whilst we rack our brains with nice and curious speculations, we generally but delude our reason with the little images and airy phantasms of things; while we weary our eyes with laborious reading, our books prove oftener the tombs than the shrines of truth; and while we pursue it through the stormy seas of controversy, there we are tossed with endless doubts and difficulties, which, like the rolling waves, crowd one upon the neck of another. And thus we grope to and fro in the dark; and it is a very great acquist, if, in our search after knowledge, we do but discover our own ignorance. It is true, as for those necessary truths which are the fundamentals of our everlasting well-being, God hath taken care

to propose them to us in so clear a light, that no man can be ignorant of them who sincerely inquires after them: but commonly the remoter any truth is from a necessary article, the less plain and obvious it is to our understanding; and therefore if in these we do err and mistake, it is not to be wondered at, considering how weak our understanding is, and what disadvantageous prospect it hath. And though these our mistakes are many times caused by a corrupt bias in our wills, by a factious prejudice, or an overweening self-conceit, by a carnal interest, or a supine neglect of the means of a better information; which, according as they are more or less wilful, do render our errors sins of infirmity, or damnable heresy; yet very often they are merely the effects of a weak-sighted mind, that is either unavoidably seduced with fair shows, or innocently tinctured with false prejudices: and in this case they are not our crimes, but our miseries. For we can no more be obliged not to err in our opinions, than not to be sick or hungry; all that we are bound to is to understand as well as we can, and if when we do so, we should happen to be deceived, we have a just claim to mercy and commiseration. And the proper acts of mercy which this miserable case requires are, first, forbearance and toleration; *with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love,* as the apostle expresses it, Ephes. iv. 2. that is, abstaining from all harsh judgments and severe censures, from all peevish separations from our communion and charity, and mutually treating each other with all the candour and forbearance, lenity and indulgence, that a pitiable case requires and deserves. For if I am in the

right, and my brother in the wrong, to be sure it is my happiness, and perhaps it is only his misery; and what an unmerciful part is it for me to damn or censure, or rigorously treat him, merely because it is his lot to be miserable, and mine to be happy? What if he hath had the ill-luck to have his brains cast into a different figure from mine, by reading different books, or keeping different company, or being prejudiced by a different education, is it reasonable that I should hate or severely judge him, because he hath been unfortunate, and perhaps could no more prevent those little errors wherein he differs from me, than he could the moles on his skin, or the different colour of his hair and complexion: what is this, but to load the oppressed, and heap misery upon misery, which is the most unmanly cruelty? In this case therefore the laws of mercy require us, as private Christians, to bear with one another's mistakes, to make the most candid judgment and construction of them, and interpret them in the most favourable sense; and not to separate from one another for trifles, or fly out into bitterness and animosity upon every little opinion which we judge false and erroneous.

2. Another act of mercy which this case requires, is to endeavour by all prudent and peaceable ways to rectify one another's mistakes. If I behold my brother's understanding labouring under the misery of error, mercy will incline me, so far as I am able, to endeavour his relief and recovery; an error in the understanding being as great a misfortune, as a wound or a disease in the body: and what merciful mind can behold that noblest part of a man diseased and affected, without being strongly inclined to ad-

minister what it can towards its health and recovery? And as mercy will incline us to it, so it will direct us to the properest means of effecting it: for if it be mercy and compassion that moves me to rectify my brother's mistake, it will move me to endeavour it with the *spirit of meekness*, which, as the apostle assures us, Gal. vi. 1. is the most likely expedient to restore him; that is, calmly and compassionately to represent to him his error, so that he may see it is not my design to expose or upbraid him, to insult over his folly, or to triumph in his confutation; but merely to set his understanding to rights, and to rescue it from the mistakes in which it is unfortunately entangled. And this, if any thing, will dispose him to listen to my reasons, and make way for my arguments to enter into his mind: whereas by deriding his error, or persecuting it with sharp and bitter invectives, I shall engage his passion to defend it, as well as his reason; for witty jests and severe sarcasms may provoke an adversary, but will never convince him. And as mercy will direct me to treat my erring brother with meekness and compassion, so it will also instruct me not to tease and importune him with perpetual disputacity; for this will look rather like an affectation of wrangling with him than a desire of convincing him; but to wait the fairest opportunity of remonstrating his error to him, when he is most at leisure, and most disposed to attend to reason and argument. For errors, like paper-kites, are many times raised and kept up in men's minds by the incessant bluster of over-fierce opposition.

3. Another of the miseries which affect men's souls is blindness and ignorance in things of the

greatest moment, which is doubtless one of the greatest miseries that can happen to a soul in this life. For the interests of souls are everlasting, they being born to live happily or miserably for ever; and their happiness depending upon the right use of their liberty, and this upon their knowledge how to use and determine it; it will be impossible for them to attain to eternal happiness, or escape eternal misery, without knowledge to steer and direct them: so that whilst they are ignorant of those truths, by which their liberty is to be governed, and their choices and actions to be determined to eternal happiness, they are under a very remote incapacity of being happy. And what a miserable case is this, to have an eternal interest at stake, and not to know how to manage it! to be travelling on this narrow line or frontier which divides those boundless continents of everlasting happiness and misery, and not to see one step of our way before us, nor to perceive whither we are going, till we are gone beyond recovery! Should you behold a blind man walking upon the brink of a fatal precipice, without any guide to direct his steps, and secure him from the neighbouring danger, would not your hearts ache and your bowels yearn for him? Would you not call out to him and warn him of his danger, and make all the haste you could to take him by the hand, and conduct him to a place of safety? And is it not a much more deplorable sight, to see a poor ignorant wretch walking blindfold on the brinks of hell, and, for want of sight to direct him heavenwards, ready to blunder at every step into the pit of destruction? Can you behold such a miserable object with a regardless eye, and yet pretend to pity or compassion? Can you sit still, and see

him cast himself into the mouth of such horrid and amazing danger, without warning him of it, and endeavouring, by the best instructions you can give him, to lead him off, and direct him to eternal happiness? Surely, did we but duly understand the worth and the danger of souls, such a woful spectacle could not but affect our bowels, and excite us to employ all our power to convince him of the danger he is running into, and instruct him how to avoid it. For this is the proper act of mercy which this miserable case calls for, viz. to endeavour to dispel that fatal ignorance which surrounds men's minds, and to enlighten them with all those principles of religion which are necessary to conduct them to eternal happiness. For it is not so great a piece of mercy to give a starving man bread, as it is to inform an ignorant sinner, and feed his famished mind with the bread of life; because without the former it is only his body will die, whereas without the latter his body and soul will die for ever. When therefore we know any persons to be grossly ignorant of God and religion, the laws of mercy require us to use all prudent means to instruct and inform them; and if they are in our power, as our children and servants are, to take care to train them up in the fear and *nurture of the Lord*, to catechise and instruct them in the doctrines of faith, and season their minds with the principles of pure religion; that so, understanding their duty, and the vast and indispensable obligations of it, they may not leap blindfold into eternal perdition. For whilst we train them up in blindness and ignorance, we do in effect predestinate them to eternal ruin, and, like those barbarous parents that offered up their children to Moloch, devote them as so many sacrifices to the

Devil. Wherefore we stand obliged, not only in fidelity to God, who hath committed their souls to our charge, and will one day require an account of them at our hands, but also in mercy to them, that they may not perish eternally for lack of knowledge, to take all possible care to instruct their minds in the duties and obligations of religion. And as mercy obliges us to instruct our children and servants, who are in our power and disposal, so it also obliges us to instruct others whom we know to be ignorant of God and their duty; to take all fair opportunities to insinuate the knowledge of divine things to them, and to cultivate their rude and barbarous minds with the principles of virtue and religion; or at least, where we cannot be admitted to do them this good office ourselves, or our endeavouring it may be looked upon as a piece of sauciness and pedantry, to recommend their miserable case to others, who have more authority with them, or from whose hands it may be better taken. For sure if we have any mercy or compassion in us, we cannot sit still, and see a miserable wretch wandering in the dark upon the confines of eternal ruin, without endeavouring by some way or other to reduce and light him back to heaven. Hence, 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26. it is made a necessary act of mercy *meekly to instruct those that oppose themselves*, that is, out of ignorance of the gospel, *if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the Devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.*

4. Another of the miseries which affect men's souls is malice and obstinacy of will in mischievous and destructive courses; which is doubtless one of

the greatest infelicities that can happen to a man on this side hell. For to be obstinate in mischievous courses is but one remove from the forlorn condition of a damned soul, which being fixed and determined to evil by the invincible obstinacy of its own will, lies under a fatal necessity of being its own eternal hell and devil: so that every degree of obstinacy in wickedness is a nearer approach to eternal damnation, and will at last inevitably centre in it, if it be not stopped in its course and progress, and cured by a timely application. Now what a deplorable sight is this, to see a wretched soul obstinately pursuing his own destruction, and even forcing his way to hell through all the resistances of his religion, and reason, and conscience together! Should you see a madman break loose from his chain, and run his head against a wall, or catch up a knife or dagger, and thrust it into his own breast, and repeat stab after stab, in despite of all your counsels and dissuasives, would you not pity and lament his case, and heartily wish him deprived of all that liberty which he employs only to his own destruction? And is it not a much more lamentable spectacle, to see a wild and desperate soul break loose from those ties of religion and conscience which bind it to its duty and happiness; and in a deaf and obstinate rage seize on the weapons of perdition, and plunge them into its own bowels, and by repeated acts of wickedness imbrue its hands in its own blood; whilst the blessed Spirit, with its own natural sense of God, are struggling with it in vain, and fruitlessly endeavouring to disarm its desperate fury, that it may not wound itself to eternal death? What merciful heart can forbear wishing, O would to God

this miserable soul had no will, that it had not the liberty to choose or act! Would to God it were a stone, or a tree, that have no power to dispose of or determine their own motions, rather than be thus left at liberty as it is, only to murder and destroy itself! But since to wish thus would be in vain, who that hath any pity can sit still, and see a miserable wretch thus outrage himself, without endeavouring to hold his hands, and bind him down with reason and good counsel? And this is the proper act of mercy which the miserable case in hand requires, viz. when we see an obstinate sinner resolutely pursuing his own destruction, to endeavour, by prudent and seasonable reproofs, by pious and compassionate counsels and admonitions, to reclaim him from the error of his way. For thus our holy religion directs us to *exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day, lest any of us should be hardened*, i. e. irrecoverably hardened, *through the deceitfulness of sin*, Heb. iii. 13. And how acceptable a work this is to God, St. James informs us, chap. v. 19, 20. *Brethren, if any of you err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.* Whereas by permitting men to run on in their sins without any check or disturbance, under a pretence of complaisance and civility, is as much as to say, "Sir, you are going headlong to destruc-
"tion, and go you are like for me: for my part,
"whether you are damned or saved, is much at one
"to me: if you are minded to make an experiment
"of damnation, much good may it do you: I know,
"should I attempt to hinder or disturb you, you

" will think me rude and troublesome; and therefore, " rather than I will run the hazard, e'en let the " Devil take you." And would it not be a high compliment, if you saw a man plunging a sword into his bowels, to cry, " Sir, I would hold your " arm, but that I am afraid you will be angry with " me?" It is true, this merciful work of reproof and admonition ought to be managed with a great deal of caution. If the person we reprove be out of our power, we ought to observe the *mollia tempora fandi;* to forbear him till his passion is down, or his intemperate draught digested; till his mind is sedate and calm, and best disposed to attend to and receive a pious admonition: for he who reproves a man when his mind is disordered by passion or intemperance, doth but preach patience to a northern wind, which the more he endeavours to resist, the louder it will storm and bluster. But then when he is fit to receive a reprehension, we ought to give it with the greatest privacy. If he offend in public conversation, where there are other witnesses of it besides ourselves, unless the matter be highly scandalous, it is sufficient for the present that we express our dislike of it by the severity of our looks and the seriousness of our behaviour; and afterwards, between him and ourselves, to remonstrate to him the folly and danger of his sin. For to reprove men publicly looks more like malice than mercy; especially till we have first made trial of private reprehensions, and found them ineffectual. But then with our reproofs we ought to take care that we do not intermingle lightness or drollery on the one hand, nor passion or sharp invectives on the other; but that we perform this merciful office with the greatest

modesty, seriousness, and compassion; first endeavouring to anticipate the offender's displeasure, with kind and gentle insinuations of our unfeigned respects and benevolence towards him; then representing his crime to him with such a compassionate sense of the evil and danger of it, as may convince him that that which renders us so severe to his sin, is nothing but mere mercy and charity to his soul: for to reprove a man lightly, or passionately, looks more like a design to deride, or reproach him for his sin, than to reclaim him from it. Lastly, we ought to take great care that the matter we reprove him for be really culpable; that we do not reprehend him for any innocent freedom, no, nor for every trifling indecency; but only for plain and unquestionable trespasses upon religion; lest he should look upon our reproofs as the language of a supercilious and morose spirit, that affects to domineer and find fault, and as such should despise and reject them. To avoid which, it is highly advisable, that, while we reprove what is evil in him, we should commend what is good; that so our bitter pill being sweetened with a due commendation, may be rendered more palatable, and so go down with less difficulty. But if the offender whom we reprove be under our power and government, to our reproofs and admonitions we are obliged in mercy to add correction, if necessity requires: for when it is come to that pass, that our child or servant must smart or be damned, it is a cruel softness and indulgence not to chastise him. Were your house on fire, you would think it a mercy to be rescued from the flames, though you were dragged out by the hair of the head: and when the flames of hell are kindling about your

child or your servant, would it not be much more merciful to snatch him away, though with smart and violence, than to stand still, and let him perish for fear of hurting him? It is true, correction ought not to be used, till gentler means have been tried, and found ineffectual: for blows are arguments for beasts and for beastly natures, fit only to be applied to stubborn and obstinate tempers, that are insensible of reason and persuasion: but when they are applied, it ought to be done with the greatest tenderness and compassion, when our minds are calm, and our passion allayed; that so the offender may be sensible we do it not to wreak our spleen, or vent and ease our fury, but merely to reclaim and amend him: the sense of which will cause the correction to operate more kindly in him, to affect his ingenuity as well as his fear, and to melt him with the mercy, whilst it breaks him with the severity of it. This therefore is the mercy which we are obliged to exercise towards obstinate and stubborn offenders.

Fifthly and lastly, Another of the miseries which affect men's souls is impotency, or want of power to recover themselves out of their vicious courses; for a vicious state doth so miserably weaken and disable men's faculties, so impair the health and vigour of their minds, that it is not in their power to help and recover themselves out of it. For to their recovery it is necessary, first, that their thoughts should be determined to a fixed and exact consideration of the evil and danger of their sins, and of the blessed hopes which God hath set before them, to tempt them to renounce and forsake them: and then that these considerations should so prevail upon and influence their wills, as to captivate them into a thorough resolution

of amendment; both which effects are out of the reach of the sinner's power, considered singly, and without the concurrence of the divine grace. For his mind is so depressed and bowed down towards these earthly and sensible objects, which have been hitherto the sole companions of his thoughts, that it is not able to raise up itself to the consideration of divine things: and though now and then, a good meditation may break in upon him, and seize upon his thoughts, yet it cannot hold them a quarter of an hour together; they are so roving and slippery, so backward and averse to any thing that is serious and divine: so that unless the divine Spirit lays hold upon them, and by his powerful and importunate inspirations confines and fixes them, the man will never be able to reduce them to any fast and steady consideration. And when with the Holy Spirit's assistance he hath effected this, he hath a perverse and obstinate will to deal with; which no considerations will be able to determine to a fixed resolution of amendment, but what are set home upon his mind, and continually actuated and enlivened with the vigorous influence of the Spirit of God. So that of himself every habitual sinner is a most weak and impotent creature, that, with all the powers of his mind and will, the utmost efforts and strugglings of his own faculties, is not able, without a supernatural aid, to rescue himself from sin and misery. For how many sorrowful instances do we every day converse with, of men, who, in their sober thoughts, will sadly lament their own follies, and blush in the morning, when they remember how their brains were set afloat by their last night's intemperance, who yet, when the next temptation beckons them to their lust again, return as

greedily to it as ever; and though, when they have repeated their sin, they curse it, and resolve against it, yet, when they are tempted, sin again, and then weep, and call themselves miserable: but still, alas! the same enchantment confines them to the same circle. Now in this, philosophy is at a stand, nor can there any other rational account be given of it, but only the miserable frailty and impotence which men contract by vicious courses. What then is to be done for these miserable persons in this their forlorn and helpless condition? Why, besides all the above-named instances of mercy, which we are obliged, even for pity's sake, to apply to them; we are also bound in mercy earnestly to recommend their woful condition to the God of all grace and compassion, to beseech him to commiserate their impotence, and with the outstretched arm of his grace to touch their dead souls, and raise them up into newness of life. For though in all cases of misery prayer is a proper act of mercy, yet there is none that doth so much need and call for our prayers as this: for in all other cases, either it is in the power of the miserable to help themselves, or it is in the power of the merciful to rescue and relieve them, or their miseries are such as will quickly end and expire into eternal ease; but as for the misery of the obstinate sinner, it is such as God alone can remedy, and such as, if it be not remedied the sooner, will quickly determine in endless and remediless misery. Wherefore, if we have any bowels of mercy or compassion in us, how can we sit still, and see an impotent sinner bound, as it were, to the stake of perdition, and not able to escape, though he sees the flames of hell rising round about him, without lifting up our eyes to God, in whom alone his help

and salvation lies, and earnestly imploring him to commiserate the perishing wretch, and to snatch him from his approaching ruin! Wherefore, as the law of mercy obliges us in general to pray for all that are in misery, so more especially for these wretched creatures, who are already within the suburbs of endless misery; and, unless God stretches forth his arm, and saves them, will be within a few moments beyond the reach of prayer and mercy. And thus you see what those instances of mercy are, which we are obliged to exercise towards the souls of men: and for the enforcement of our duty herein, I shall subjoin some considerations to excite our Christian compassion.

1. Consider the inestimable worth of those souls upon which your mercy is to be employed. I confess, were the souls of men of the same alloy with their bodies, whose highest pleasures do consist in the gratification of a few brutish senses, and are nothing else but the agreeable touches of certain little skins and arteries, which are as inconsiderable as a lutestring, and which, after they have repeated these pleasures some twenty or thirty years, do commonly expire into insensibility and rottenness; were, I say, their souls of the same make and frame, it were not so much to be admired that we are so indifferently affected towards them. But these precious beings are of a much nobler constitution; their faculties are made to relish godlike and angelical delights; to drink for ever of that divine nectar of contemplation, and holiness, and love; and to feast upon those joys with which God entertains himself, and all his choir of angels: and as they are born to much higher pleasures and enjoyments, than those wretched bodies

which enclose them, so they are also made for an infinitely longer life and duration: for they must live for ever in inconceivable happiness or misery; and when their bodies are mouldered into insensible dust, be partaking either of the raptures of angels, or of the horrors and agonies of devils. And can I think myself obliged in mercy to feed and clothe the body of my child or servant, the body which within a few days, in despite of all my care and pains, will resolve into a clod of stupid earth, and yet be altogether unconcerned what becomes of that precious soul, which must be the subject of an everlasting happiness or misery! Is it possible I should be so careful and solicitous as I am, to heap up great fortunes for my children, that so they may swim in plenty a few moments, wear fine clothes, and fare deliciously every day, and at last go down to the worms with pomp; and in the mean time neglect that immortal being within them, which, when all the wealth I provided for them is shrunk into six foot of earth and a winding-sheet, must be a glorified spirit or a damned ghost! Sure did we but seriously consider, with what vast capacities of happiness or misery the souls of men are framed and constituted, and what proportionable fates do attend them, we should be much more solicitous than we are, not only to secure our own souls, but also to make a timely provision for the souls of our children and relations.

2. Consider how much you are interested and concerned in the fate of the souls of others, but especially of your children and servants. For in this state of danger, wherein we are placed, God hath committed us to one another's care, with a strict injunction that we should *exhort one another daily*,

while it is called To-day, lest any of us be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, Heb. iii. 13. And if, when it is in our power to prevent it, we suffer our brother to be irrecoverably hardened in his sin, we are accountable for it at the tribunal of God, who will one day severely charge us for this our cruel unfaithfulness to our brother, in suffering him to miscarry for ever, without admonishing him of his danger, and endeavouring to rescue him from it by our charitable counsels and persuasions: so that if we suffer him to fall, by neglecting to exhort and admonish him, in all probability he will not fall alone, but pull us down along with him into eternal perdition. Wherefore it concerns us for our own sakes, so far as we have opportunity, to discharge all offices of mercy towards the souls of others; lest, whilst they perish through our neglect, we should be involved in their ruin. But then as for our children and servants, their souls are more immediately committed to our care and conduct, as being placed under our power and disposal by God's overruling providence; which, by bestowing them upon us, and placing them with us, doth in effect thus bespeak us: "These "precious souls I intrust in your hands, to be edu-"cated and trained up to eternal happiness: see you "give me a good account of them; for if they perish "through your neglect, whenever I make inquisition "for blood, I will certainly require it at your hands." How then shall we be able to lift up our heads, when God shall demand of us what are become of those precious jewels which he committed to our trust? If through our barbarous neglect they should happen to be lost and forfeited to eternal misery; if, through a wretched regardlessness of their eternal interest, we

have not instructed and admonished them; if, through a cruel fondness and indulgence, we have not reproved and corrected them; or if, by our wicked connivance or example, we have encouraged and soothed them up in any destructive course of action, and so they should finally miscarry; Lord, what a dreadful account shall we have to give, when we come to appear at thy tribunal, where the blood of our children and our servants' souls shall join with our own personal guilts to cry aloud for vengeance against us! Wherefore, if we have no pity or compassion for them, yet let us at least be so merciful to ourselves, as not to omit those offices of mercy which we are obliged to render to them.

3. Consider what a mighty influence your mercy may have upon their welfare. It is not to be imagined how many souls might be saved from perishing, were we but so kind and merciful as to distribute the bread of life to one another, according as we have ability and opportunity: how many a dark mind might be enlightened by our sound and pious instructions! how many a headstrong will might we curb and restrain by our prudent and seasonable reproofs and admonitions! And how can we tell, but these our merciful endeavours may, through the concurrence of divine grace, prove blessed means of their final recovery and happiness? And if so, what better office can we do in the world, or what higher dignity can we aspire to, than to be the saviours and redeemers of souls? And if by our instructions and admonitions we might do so much good in our common conversation among men, how much more might we do in our own families! For our children and servants being under our power and govern-

ment, will upon that account receive our admonitions with greater awe and reverence; and consequently comply with them with greater ease and readiness. And then, we having the conduct of their young and tender years, in which their minds and manners may be easily shaped in any form, it is in our power to stamp upon them what impressions we please: so that, would we but now take care to instruct their minds and regulate their wills with wise and good principles and admonitions, we might easily impregnate their natures with strong dispositions to virtue and religion; and so by degrees cultivate those dispositions into a state of grace and habitual goodness. And when this blessed effect is so much in our power, what a cruel neglect is it not to contribute towards it so far as we are able! Should you see a mother deny a morsel of bread to her famished child, when she hath enough and to spare; or strip it stark naked in a deep winter's frost, and expose it on the mountains to be starved with cold; would you not brand her for a monster of her sex, and exclaim against her with the greatest detestation and abhorrence? And yet, alas! that unnatural cruelty, which we should so much abhor in another, we ourselves are too often guilty of in a much higher degree. For by neglecting to instruct and educate our families in religion, we deny them the most necessary thing in the world, even that which is the food and raiment of their souls; without which they cannot live, but must necessarily starve and famish for ever: and therefore, by how much more precious their souls are than their bodies, and by how much more deplorable eternal death is than temporal, by so much the more barbarous and inhuman are those parents who do

not institute their children in religion, than those who suffer them to perish with hunger or cold. For are you such infidels as to imagine that they are born only for this life, and that there is nothing beyond the grave in which they are concerned? If not, what account can you give of this your unnatural neglect of them? If you think they must live for ever when they are gone out of this world, why then do not you take care that they may live in the other world, as well as in this? O improvident that we are! Can we be so much concerned that they may be happy for a moment, and yet so indifferent whether they are happy or miserable for ever? Are their souls such trifles, or their everlasting fate such an indifferent matter, as that, when it is so much in your power, you think it not worth your while to concern yourselves so much about them? Wherefore, in the name of God, consider with yourselves, what an infinite deal of good you are capable of doing them by your pious instructions and admonitions, and what an unnatural barbarity it would be to omit and neglect it.

CHAP. II.

Of mercy, as it relieves the miseries of the body.

I SHALL now proceed to the second sort of miseries, viz. such as do affect men's bodies; under which I shall shew you what acts of mercy this kind of miseries requires of us. Now these, as the former, may be reduced to five heads:

First, Natural blemishes and defects.

Secondly, Sicknesses and diseases.

Thirdly, Outward force and violence injuriously offered to them by those in whose power they are.

Fourthly, Civil or arbitrary punishments inflicted on them for injuries received.

Fifthly, Want of outward necessaries.

1. One of the miseries which affect men's bodies is their natural blemishes and defects; such as lameness or crookedness, the want of our senses, or the disproportion of our parts or features; all which are real infelicities, forasmuch as they render our bodies either less useful to ourselves, or less graceful and amiable to others. And indeed our body, being an object of sense, is usually much more remarked and taken notice of than our soul, which is an invisible being; and consequently, the defects and blemishes of our bodies lying more in view, are much more liable to be reflected on, both by ourselves and those we converse with, than the stains and deformities of our minds and wills; which, being placed out of sight, are less exposed to observation: which is the reason that our corporeal defects are so grievous to us, because being so apparent as they are, both to our own and others' senses, they do not only upbraid us to ourselves, who, being led by sense, are apt to value ourselves by sensible graces and perfections, but are also prone to create a mean and contemptible opinion of us in the minds of others; the very suspicion of which, if we are not raised above such mean considerations, will be exceeding apt to grieve and afflict us. In this case therefore the law of mercy requires us not to contemn or undervalue men, not to upbraid or reproach them, upon the account of any bodily blemish or defect; but to overlook these, as inconsiderable flaws of their case and outside, and ren-

der them all those honours and respects which the graces and virtues of their minds deserve: considering that the body is not the man, but the immortal mind that inhabits it; and that many times the richest diamonds wear the roughest coats and outsides; that those natural blemishes are infelicities which men could not prevent, and which they cannot rectify; that it was not in their power to order nature in their own composure, but that what they had there was such as they could neither give themselves, nor yet refuse when it was bequeathed to them; and that therefore to deride and expose them for any mishap or blemish in their composition is to fling salt into their wounds, to fret and inflame their misery. And yet, alas! how common a practice is this, to sport with the deformities of men, as if God and nature had designed them for so many finger-butts of scorn and derision; to make them the themes of our jests and laughter; which is a lamentable instance of the foul degeneracy of human nature, that can thus play upon misery, and turn that, which is an object of pity and compassion, into a triumph of mirth and drollery: for certainly, how light and trifling soever it may appear through the common practice of it, it is a sign of barbarous ill-nature for men to deride those defects and blemishes in another, which he is too prone to grieve at, but yet cannot help, as being his infelicities, and not his faults.

2. Another of the miseries which affect men's bodies is sicknesses and diseases; by which the strength of our nature is gradually exhausted, the vigour of our spirits wasted, the activity of our parts cramped and abated, and our bodies are rendered through in-

cessant pains and weakness, not only useless, but burdensome to our souls. In this case therefore the law of mercy requires of us to render to our sick friends, neighbours, and acquaintance all such good offices as do any way conduce to their support, refreshment, or recovery. As, first, if their sickness be such as will safely admit of discourse and conversation, we are obliged in mercy to visit them, provided that our company will be acceptable: and to endeavour by our discourse to cheer their drooping spirits, to intermix their sorrowful hours with the pleasures of good conversation, and to administer to their wearied thoughts the supports and comforts of religion. For cheerful and good discourse is many times better than the richest cordial; it makes the patient to forget his pain, or at least allays and mitigates his sense of it; it diverts his thoughts from their sorrowful themes, and entertains them with brisk and sprightful ideas; it raises the languishing heart, and, like David's music, charms the rage of those evil spirits which infest it with their unnatural heats. So that by visiting our sick friends, when they are willing to admit of our conversation, and able to bear it, we many times prove their best physicians, and administer to them the greatest relief and ease; and therefore, if, when we might do them so much good by our company, we needlessly withdraw or absent ourselves from them, we are very much wanting in our charity and mercy towards them. But then, as we are obliged in mercy to visit them, when their case will safely and conveniently admit of it, so we are also obliged by the same mercy to render them all those necessary assistances, which either their souls or bodies do require and need; to endeavour to

awaken their minds into serious thoughts and purposes, to advise them of their duty, and to resolve their doubts, to comfort and support them with the blessed hopes of religion, and to take all fair opportunities to prepare their souls for a happy death and a glorious eternity; that so, whether they recover or no, this temporary sickness of their bodies may contribute to the eternal health of their souls. And then, in order to their recovery, we stand bound by the laws of mercy to contribute what we are able to their bodily ease and refreshment; to be ready to serve them in all their necessities, and to help them when they cannot help themselves; to compassionate their griefs, and bear with their peevishnesses, and to the best of our knowledge to direct them to the ablest physicians or the most suitable means; and if they are poor and indigent, to supply them with all such remedies as are necessary to their health and recovery: and lastly, to be their earnest advocates at the throne of grace, that the God of all power and goodness, in whose hands are the issues of life and death, would commiserate their sorrows and refresh their weariness, and either remove their sickness, or sanctify it to their eternal health.

3. Another of the miseries which affect men's bodies is outward force and violence from those in whose power they are; such as captivity and imprisonment, persecutions, or cruel torments; all which do importunately solicit the timely succours of our mercy and compassion. For so for the first of them, viz. bondage and captivity, it is a sore and comprehensive misery, that commonly draws a long and heavy chain of calamities after it: for it is not only a deprivation

of our liberty, which is one of the dearest of all our temporal blessings, but also a confiscation of it into the hands and disposal of our enemies: and when our persons are exposed to the will and tyranny of our enemies, what can be expected from them, in this degenerate state of human nature, but a cruel and barbarous usage; to be worn out with stripes and hunger and intolerable labour, and to be forced to pine away our wretched lives in unpitied anguish and vexation of soul; especially if those whom we are enslaved to happen to be enemies to our religion as well as country: which is the case of those miserable captives with whom our mercy is most concerned; who being under the power of those that are sworn enemies to the name of Christ, must upon that account expect to be treated with much more rigour and severity; there being no enmity so fierce and cruel, as that which is backed and set on by conscience, and enraged with zeal for religion. And when men are ill treated, not only as they are slaves, but as they are Christians, what a hazardous temptation are they under to renounce their Christianity, and to exchange their hopes of heaven for their liberty, and to enslave their souls to ransom their bodies! And when both their souls and bodies are thus exposed to wretchedness and misery, what woful circumstances can render them more proper objects of our mercy? Wherefore, in this case, we are obliged in mercy, when any fair opportunity is proposed to us, to contribute to their ransom proportionably to our ability; and so far as it is consistent with the public benefit, to solicit their cause both with God and men; to beseech him to support and

preserve them, and to persuade all those with whom we have any power or interest, to a liberal concurrence towards their relief and redemption.

And then as for imprisonment, which is a sort of captivity too, what a calamitous condition is it for a man to be shut up in a close and unwholesome durance, to dwell with hunger and cold, and be confined to a hard lodging, a dark solitude, or a wretched company? to be sequestered from the conversation of his friends, from the comforts of diversion, and from his business and employment, and all opportunities of making provision for his poor family? All which unhappy circumstances do commonly meet in the state and condition of prisoners, and render it exceedingly wretched and miserable. In which case the mercy which is required of us is, first to visit them in this their uncomfortable solitude and confinement, supposing that they are our friends and acquaintance; and to endeavour by our conversation to divert their sorrows, to raise and strengthen their hopes, and to cheer them with fresh assurances of our friendship; and then to use all just endeavours to mollify their adversaries, to vindicate their innocence, or to compound their debts, if they are not able to discharge them. But whether they are our friends or acquaintance, or no, the law of mercy obliges us, as we have opportunity and ability, to relieve their necessities, to redress their injuries, and if it be just and feasible, to contribute to their enlargement, that so they may enjoy themselves with comfort, and by their honest industry make provision for those who depend on them.

And then, lastly, for bodily torments and persecutions, you need not be told what a misery that is;

for your own sense will inform you, how dolorous it is to flesh and blood to be cruelly scourged, beaten, and abused; to be pinched with hunger, harassed with labour, and dispirited for want of necessary ease and refreshment; and therefore, as mercy binds you by the strictest obligations not to inflict these evils upon your children, or servants, or any others that are in your power and disposal; so it also engages you to endeavour the relief of all such unhappy persons whom you know to be thus cruelly treated; to intercede in their behalf with those their hard-hearted parents, masters, or conquerors, by whom they are thus unmercifully dealt with, to remonstrate to them their cruelty and inhumanity, and to endeavour, by such arguments as are most likely to affect them, to reduce them to a more merciful temper and treatment; and if, in despite of your arguments, they still persist in their cruelty, to use all just and lawful ways to curb and restrain them, to complain of them to those who have power to correct them, and to rescue the miserable wretches out of their power and disposal.

And then as for those who are unjustly persecuted for their conscience and religion, who, to secure their souls, and their loyalty to God and their Saviour, are forced to fly from their habitations and countries, or to submit themselves to spoil and depredation, to imprisonment and famine, torture and death; these doubtless are of all others the greatest objects of our mercy, because they suffer for our common Master and in our common cause, which ought to be dearer to us than our own lives; because our religion suffers with them; and what they suffer we must suffer, (unless we will renounce our religion,) if ever we are

reduced to their circumstances. And can we with unconcerned hearts behold our persecuted brethren, flying into our arms for succour before the mighty Nimrods of the earth, with their souls, their consciences, and their religion in their hands, and with pitiful looks beseeching us to deliver them from the dreadful dilemma they are put to, of delivering up their souls or bodies for a prey, without agonies of pity and compassion? And if we have any mercy or compassion for them, by what more suitable acts can we express it, than by a kind and welcome reception of those who fly to us for succour, and a free and liberal contribution towards their relief snd subsistence; and by assisting those with the charity of our prayers, whom we cannot reach with the charity of our alms; or, as the apostle expresses it, by *remembering those that are in bonds*, that is, so as to pity them and pray for them, and, if it were in our power, so as to visit and comfort and relieve them, *as being bound with them*, and also with the same effect to remember those that *suffer adversity, as being ourselves also in the body*. Heb. xiii. 3.

4. Another of the miseries which affect men's bodies is civil or arbitrary punishments inflicted on them for injuries received. For all considerable injuries do give us a right to punish the offender, either by due course of law, or else immediately by our own power and authority. If by nature or compact the offender be put under our power and disposal, his offence gives us a right to correct him by our own authority; if not, his offence gives us right to appeal to the public tribunals, and there to exact of him such penalties as the law denounces in the case. Now because men's souls are out of the reach of all

human punishments, and liable only to the lash of the Father of spirits; therefore we can exact no other penalties of offenders, but only such as do affect their bodies with shame, or pain, with loss of bodily goods, or wearisome labour, or confinement of liberty; all which being miseries to the body, are proper objects of our compassion and mercy. And what mercy these miseries require may be easily collected from the natural end of punishment, which is, not so much to offend the guilty, as to defend the innocent; not so much to hurt or damnify the offender, as to restrain him from hurting himself or others; and to warn others, by the example of his punishment, not to imitate the example of his offence. So that, according to its true and natural design, punishment is rather an act of mercy than an act of revenge; the end of it being to do good, and not to retaliate evil; to defend myself or others against the offenders, or else to defend the offenders against themselves, or to defend others against the prevailing infection of their lewd and pernicious examples: and whosoever punishes, to vent and ease his spleen, or gratify his malice with the hurt and mischief of the offender, transgresses the end of punishment, and, under pretence of justice, sacrifices to his own cruelty. No man hath right to do another hurt, unless it be necessary to some good end: for to hurt without any reason is a brutish savageness, and to hurt without a good reason, devilish rancour. He therefore who hurts another merely to hurt him, acts with the intention of a devil, who doth mischief for mischief's sake, and plagues his wretched vassals merely to recreate himself with their miseries, and pacify his own black rage and malice. Since therefore the

end of punishment is doing good, it ought to be executed with a good will, and a kind and benevolent intention; not to discharge our rage, or tickle and recreate our malice, but either to vindicate our own right, or to reclaim the offender, or to terrify others from his sin by his sufferings. This therefore is the first thing which the law of mercy requires of us, in respect to our punishing offenders, that we should always do it with a good and benevolent intention. But then,

2. It also requires us not to exact punishment for small and trifling offences: for since the end of punishment is doing good, it is cruelty to exact it for slight and inconsiderable evils; because in this case the punishment is a greater hurt than the offence. And what reason can I have to hurt another for such small offences as do little or no hurt either to myself or others, but only to gratify my own revenge and malice? As for instance, suppose that in a heat of passion a man should give me the lie, or call me by an ill name, or treat me with reproachful language; and thereupon I should strike or wound him, or prosecute him with a vexatious suit at law: in this case it is plain my punishment would hurt him more than his offence could hurt me, and consequently my design in punishing him would be to do hurt, and not good; and to design to do hurt is malice and cruelty. Wherefore, in case of lighter injuries, the law of mercy requires us wholly to remit and forgive them: and not rigidly to exact the hurt of the offender for such trifling offences as do no great hurt either to ourselves or others.

3. The law of mercy also obliges us not to punish an offender, when we can do no good by it, either to our-

selves, or to him, or to others; for in this case to punish can serve no other end but to fulfil the lust of our revenge and malice. As for instance, suppose I have a poor insolvent debtor, that owes me a great deal, and can pay me nothing; and it were in my power, not only to cast him into prison, but to force him to languish away his wretched life; to what end should I inflict this punishment upon him? I cannot hope to recover my own by it; for a prison, we say, will pay no debts; and where nothing is, nothing can be expected: I cannot design to reform him by it, since prisons are commonly the most fruitful nurseries of wickedness: I cannot aim to warn others by it, for what warning can oblige men to do that which is impossible? What end can I propose then, but only the humouring of a wrathful mind, and to glut it with revenge and mischief? And if this be the point I drive at, I run from all the rules of mercy.

4. The law of mercy also obliges me not to punish an offender, so long as the end of punishing him is fairly attainable by gentler means. For if when I can obtain my end of an offender by persuasion and forbearance, I rather choose to extort it from him by punishment; it is plain that I have a cruel intention towards him, and do affect to hurt and mischief him: for when I may obtain my end of him by forbearance or gentle persuasions, why should I choose to force it from him by rigour and severity, but that I am either insensible of his hurt, or else do take pleasure to afflict and grieve him? Wherefore in all such punishments as are within our power, the law of mercy obliges us, first, to try softer and gentler ways, and make a long and thorough experiment of

the methods of kindness, persuasion, and forbearance; and if by these we can obtain our end, and conquer the offender, and vindicate our own right, to remit our right of punishing him, and forbear all rigour and severity. For punishment is our last remedy, and ought never to be applied to offenders, till gentler means have been tried and defeated.

5. The law of mercy also obliges us to inflict no more punishment on offenders, than what is absolutely necessary to the obtaining those good ends we design by it. For he who punishes an offender more than is needful to the natural end of punishment, can design no other end by it but what is cruel and barbarous: and whatsoever is more than needful, either to the vindicating our own right, or the reforming the offender, or the giving fair warning to others, serves to no other purpose but to gratify our own revenge and fury. So far as punishment is needful to these good ends, it is not only lawful, but good: but all beyond what is needful to these is perfect savageness and cruelty. When therefore, for the obtaining these ends, we are necessitated to punish an offender, the law of mercy obliges us first to try lighter and gentler punishments; and if by these we cannot obtain our end, to proceed in our severities by degrees, and not to fly to extreme rigour, till we have found all gentler corrections ineffectual. For if a lighter punishment will do the work, it is cruelty to lay on a heavier: and whether it will or no, is no otherwise to be known than by trial.

Sixthly, and lastly, The law of mercy also requires us always to punish short of the offence; i. e. where the punishment is in your power, and you are not determined by a legal necessity to use the utmost

extremity. For where you are legally obliged either to judge or prosecute an offender, there you are to proceed by the measures of the law, which obliges you, and which usually determines you to the kind and degrees of the punishment to be inflicted: but where the matter is wholly in your power, either to remit of or augment the punishment, there the law of mercy obliges you not to exact the utmost. For if you punish more than the offence deserves, you are unjust and tyrannical; because as your right to punish accrues from the offence that is done to you, so your right to punish to such a degree accrues from the degree of the offence; which you cannot exceed without exceeding your right, and exacting more punishment of the offender than he owes you. So that every degree of punishment which exceeds the demerit of the fault is lawless and licentious violence, to which we can pretend no right, and by which we do an injurious outrage to the offender. And as when our punishment exceeds the offence, we punish without justice; so, when it equals the offence, we punish without mercy. For the utmost degree of just severity admits no intermixture of mercy, the office of which is to relieve the miserable, and consequently to relieve them, when they have injured and offended us, of some part of the evils and miseries they deserve. Wherefore, as he is an unmerciful creditor, who, rather than abate the least part of his due, will strip his poor debtor to the skin, and reduce him to the utmost pinch and extremity of need; so he is an unmerciful punisher, that exacts to the full demerit of the fault, and stretches his right of punishing to the utmost extent, to make the offender miserable. In this case therefore the law of mercy re-

quires us to follow the great example of God, who in the midst of justice doth always remember mercy; who makes large abatements of his right to punish us, and never exacts of us the utmost plagues and sufferings which our iniquities deserve. Conformably to which excellent pattern, we are obliged, in punishing others, to intermingle mercy with our severities; and proportionably to the offender's penitence, or the pitiable circumstances of his fault, or the misery and necessities of his present condition, to make an equitable abatement and defalcation of his punishment. And thus you see what that mercy is which is required of us with respect to our punishing of others.

Fifthly, and lastly, Another of the miseries which affect men's bodies is want of the outward necessaries of this present life, such as meat and drink, lodging and apparel; the want of which cannot but render our life exceeding wretched and miserable. For what an insupportable grievance is it to our nature, to be pinched with an impatient hunger, or suffocated with a burning drought; to be forced to prey upon itself for want of other fuel, or to appease its furious appetites with loathsome, heartless, or unwholesome sustenance; to see a hungry family crying about us for want of bread, and have little or none to give them; to behold our children shivering with cold and drooping with famine, and not be able to succour and relieve them; whilst our pined and miserable carcasses are either covered with loathsome rags, or nakedly exposed to the injuries of the weather, and more destitute and unprovided than the foxes and birds, for want of a hole or nest where to lay their heads! These are circumstances miserable enough to move a heart of stone to pity and compas-

sion: in this case therefore we are obliged by the law of mercy, first, to a tender sympathy and commiseration; to affect our souls with a soft and compassionate sense of the wants of our poor brethren, to put ourselves in their case, and represent their condition to our own hearts and affections, as if it were our own; and thereby to endeavour and excite in ourselves a proportionable feeling of their calamity and misery. And to this we are universally obliged, whether we are high or low, rich or poor, whether we are in circumstances to relieve the needs of others, or to need relief for ourselves; for so the precept runs universally, *Finally, be all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous,* 1 Pet. iii. 8. And as we are universally obliged to compassionate those that are in need, so we are also bound, according as we have opportunity and ability, to succour and relieve them. Indeed if we are poor and needy, we are by no means obliged to pinch ourselves or our families, to relieve the necessities of others; for the desire of self-preservation being of all others the most vehement passion which God hath implanted in our natures, he doth thereby not only warrant but direct us to take care of ourselves in the first place, and not to sacrifice the means of our own preservation to the needs and necessities of others. And then our nearest relatives being next to ourselves, we are obliged in the next place to relieve them; and consequently, in all competitions for our relief and mercy, to prefer the wants and necessities of our own families. But though we may not be able, without wronging our families, to give alms to our necessitous brother, yet if, by representing his necessities to others, who are

better able to relieve him, if by soliciting his cause and begging relief for him, which he perhaps is ashamed to do for himself, we can any way contribute to his succour and support, we stand strictly obliged to it by the laws of mercy: and this, if we can do no more, will be as acceptable to God as the most liberal alms. For where the deed is impossible, God always accepts the will for it, and reckons in all these good works to our account, which he knows we would do, if we were able. But when he hath furnished us with means, as well as opportunities, to relieve the necessitous, he expects the deed as well as the will from us; knowing that we cannot sincerely will the deed, if, when it is in our power, we do not effect it. Hence is that of the Hebrews, xiii. 16. *To do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifice God is well pleased.* And accordingly the apostle bids Timothy, 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18, to *charge them that are rich*, i. e. whose enjoyments do exceed their necessities, *that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.* And how necessary the deed is to the sincerity of the will, when it is in our power, that passage of St. John doth fully evidence, 1 Ep. iii. 17. *But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* This therefore is an act of mercy indispensably due from us to those who are in necessity, to contribute according to our ability towards their relief and support; and accordingly *alms*, which signifies a gift to one that is in need, comes from the Greek word ἐλεημοσύνη, and that from ἔλεος,

which signifies *mercy;* which plainly denotes it to be one of the greatest and most principal acts of mercy that we owe to the miserable.

CHAP. III.

Of almsgiving, as to the manner of performing it; and some motives thereunto.

WE have seen that almsgiving is one of the principal acts of mercy; and it being so, I shall more largely insist upon it, and endeavour to shew,

First, The manner in which it ought to be performed: and

Secondly, To press the performance of it by some considerations.

I. The manner in which this duty of almsgiving ought to be performed, and that in these following particulars:

First, It ought to be performed with a good and merciful intention.

Secondly, Justly and righteously.

Thirdly, Readily and cheerfully.

Fourthly, Liberally and bountifully.

Fifthly, Timely and seasonably.

Sixthly, Discreetly and prudently.

1. This duty of almsgiving ought to be performed with a good and merciful intention; not merely to court the applauses and commendations of men, to bring our names in vogue, or to serve our secular designs; but chiefly and principally to express our gratitude and duty to God, and confidence in him;

who hath not only filled our cup, but crowned it with an overflowing plenty, thereby enabling us to relieve others, and thereby constituting us trustees for the poor and needy, with a strict and inviolable charge to give them their food in due season; to which he hath annexed a bill of credit under his own broad seal, to repay us the principal of our alms with a thousand-fold interest. With respect therefore to these mighty reasons, and out of a tender commiseration to our poor brethren, we ought to perform our alms; that so, like curls of holy incense, they may ascend to heaven, and breathe a sweet smelling savour into the nostrils of God; for it is by this alone that they are consecrated into an acceptable sacrifice to him, and rendered true piety and devotion: whereas if we give our alms merely or mainly to be seen of men, or to serve a worldly interest, they proceed not from mercy, but self-love. And since all acts that are materially good do receive their form and denomination from the intention, such pharisaical alms can be denominated neither pieties nor mercies, but are a sordid traffick for applause and interest; and hence our Saviour cautions us, *Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward,* Matt. vi. 1, 2.

2. This duty of almsgiving ought to be performed with justice and righteousness, that is, we ought not to give that in alms which is none of our own, sup-

posing it hath a rightful owner, to whom we can make a restitution of it. For what we have wrongfully got is none of ours, but his whom we have wrongfully deprived of it; and to him we are bound in conscience to restore it, in case he be living, and we know where to find him; if not, to his lawful heirs or assigns: but if either the party be dead whom we have wronged of it, or we cannot find him, or any heir of his, that can lawfully claim it, it is not only lawful but necessary for us to bestow it upon the poor and needy. For where there is no visible owner, the property reverts immediately into the hands of the supreme Lord of the world, who hath settled it as a pension on the poor, to eke out the narrow provisions which his providence hath made for them. But to give alms out of those unlawful gains, which we are obliged in justice to restore to the rightful owners, is to make ourselves the thieves, and the poor the receivers. For to do alms is to give away something of our own to remedy another's want or misery; and therefore to give away one man's right, to supply another's necessity, is not so much an alms as a robbery. By this rule, therefore, debtors that owe more than they can pay are obliged in conscience not to entrench upon their justice by their mercy, nor to disable themselves from being just to their creditors by being merciful to the poor. For though to relieve the poor be nakedly and abstractedly good, yet it is to be considered, that particular actions are good or bad according as the circumstances are which adhere to them: and when that action which is nakedly good happens to be clothed with an evil circumstance, it is so far evil and unlawful. And therefore when my relieving

the poor is accompanied with this evil circumstance, of defrauding my creditors of their due, I am so far bound in conscience not to relieve them; because if I do, I must relieve them unjustly. This therefore we are especially to take care of, that our alms be just and righteous.

3. This duty of almsgiving ought to be performed readily and cheerfully. For this is the apostle's own direction. *Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver,* 2 Cor. ix. 7. And indeed if we give alms out of a principle of mercy and compassion, it is impossible but we must do it cheerfully; because by compassion we make others' miseries our own, and so by relieving them we relieve ourselves, and are partakers with them in the comfort of those reliefs we afford them. For when I see a man struggling with want, and groaning under a sharp necessity, if I relieve him, I ease and refresh my own yearning bowels; and the human nature within me, which is common to us both, doth by a kind of sympathetic motion exalt and raise up itself, and swells with a generous pleasure. So that if mercy be the spring of my alms, they will flow with a free and cheerful current, because all the while I am watering others, I shall feel the refreshment of my own streams. When therefore we bestow our alms with a grudging and unwilling mind, it is plain that it is not mercy, but shame, or fear, or importunity that moves us; and if so, there is no virtue in them, nor can we expect that any reward should attend them. For to contribute towards another's relief because we are ashamed or afraid to do otherwise, is rather paying a tax than

giving an alms; and when nothing can be wrung out of me but what is distrained by importunity, I give not for the poor's relief, but for my own peace and quiet. And what virtue is it for a man to give only to get rid of a dun, and ease himself of a troublesome importunity? Wherefore to render our alms virtuous and rewardable, it is necessary that they should be performed with a free and cheerful heart; that they should flow, like water from a spring, in natural and unforced streams, and not be pumped from us with shame or importunity.

4. This duty of almsgiving ought to be performed liberally and bountifully, according to the proportion of our estate and abilities. For the design of those alms which are the fruits of mercy is to redress the poor man's misery, to satisfy his hungry bowels, and rescue him from the pinching necessities under which he groans and languishes. And this being the design of mercy, it measures its alms accordingly, and proportions them to the craving necessities it supplies. And its aim being not only to rescue the miserable from extreme misery, but also, according to its power, to render them happy, it doth not think it sufficient to rescue the necessitous from extreme want and famine, but doth also covet to render their lives happy, and give them a comfortable enjoyment of themselves. For merely to keep a man from famishing, looks rather like a design to prolong his torment, and spin out the duration of his misery, than to contribute to his ease and happiness; and if we design his happiness, as we must do if we design mercifully, we shall endeavour not only to enable him to live, but to live comfortably, and accordingly proportion our alms. It is true, the

liberality of our alms is to be measured, not according to the quantity of them, but according to the proportion they bear to our power and ability; and though I should give five times less than one who hath ten times my estate, yet I should be as liberal as he, according to the proportion of my ability: and accordingly the indigent widow's two mites are pronounced by our Saviour a more liberal alms than the much more which those which were rich cast into the treasury, Mark xii. 42, 43, 44. *Because they cast in of their abundance, but she of her want.* And therefore though (as I shall shew by and by) it is impossible to determine the measures of alms which we are obliged to, because the particular measure of our ability is so various, yet this to be sure the law of mercy exacts, that in proportion to our estates and circumstances, they should be liberal and bountiful. For he who gives in such slender proportions as bring little or no relief to the receiver, acts as if he designed rather to mock him than to supply his necessities; or as if he intended rather to keep him alive for a prey to a long and lingering misery, than to render his life happy and comfortable.

5. This duty of almsgiving ought to be performed timely and seasonably, i. e. in the nick of opportunity, when the poor man's necessities call loudest for it, and our relief and succour may be most beneficial to him. To such poor indeed as do always want, our alms can never be unseasonable, because their necessities do always call for them: but there are some particular seasons when their wants call louder, as in times of sickness, or scarceness of work, or dearness of provisions, or in the beginning of

arrests, before the prison hath devoured them; or after a great loss, when their fortunes are sinking, and a small support may keep their heads above water; or, in a word, when they are young and capable of work, or instruction, and their parents are not able to dispose of them, when the placing them out to some honest calling may prevent their turning thieves or beggars, and render them useful to the world; or when they are setting up their trades with an insufficient stock, and a little help may encourage their diligence, and advance them to a comfortable livelihood. These and such like are the proper seasons of almsgiving; in which, by tendering our helping hand, we may rescue many a poor wretch out of a deep abyss of misery, and render their future condition happy and prosperous. Wherefore the law of mercy obliges us, not only to bestow our alms, but to bestow them at such times and seasons wherein they are most needed, and may do the greatest good; that we should not reserve them to our last will and testament, like medlars that are never good till they are rotten, but embrace all opportunities, while we are living, to give timely reliefs to the necessitous. For he who defers his alms, when such proper seasons are presented, is so far the cause of all the consequent calamities which the poor do suffer by the want of them: and since the design of men's alms is to relieve the sufferings of the poor, it is doubtless a degree of cruelty to prolong their sufferings, by needlessly delaying to relieve them. You would think her a cruel mother, that, having bread enough and to spare, should rather choose to afflict her child with a long, unsatisfied hunger, than to content its craving appetite, by giving it its food in due season:

and sure it is a great defect of compassion unnecessarily to prolong the sufferings of our indigent brother, though it be but for a day or an hour, when we have a present opportunity to relieve him: and since whatsoever relief we do design him, he must necessarily lose so much of it as the time of our delay amounts to, mercy obliges us to relieve him quickly, and not to suffer him to pine away, whilst our charity is growing.

Sixthly and lastly, This duty of almsgiving ought to be performed discreetly and prudently: for thus the Psalmist tells us, Psalm cxii. 5. *A good man sheweth favour and lendeth; and will guide his affairs with discretion.* And indeed unless prudence be the dispenser of our alms, mercy will miss of what it aims at and designs by them; which is to do good to the poor, to supply their craving necessities, and give them a comfortable enjoyment of themselves: instead of which, if we do not manage our charities with prudence, we shall many times create necessities by supplying them, and increase and multiply the miseries of the world by an unskilful endeavour to redress them. For it is with alms as it is with estates, where half of the riches doth consist in the discretion of the owner; and those very charities, which being distributed by a blind superstition or a foolish pity, do many times do more hurt than good, might have been improved into a plentiful provision for the necessities of the world, had they been wisely ordered and disposed. But what harvest can the world reap from this precious seed of our alms, when they are sown with a careless or unskilful hand? when they are either thrown on a heap, to useless or superstitious purposes, or scat-

tered at all adventures without any distinction of the cultivated from the fallow ground; so that the birds of prey, the useless vagrants, drones and beggars, devour and eat them up, whilst the modest, impotent, and laborious poor are utterly destitute and unprovided? Since therefore the design of mercy is to do good with its alms, to comfort and relieve the poor, and supply their pinching necessities, it is doubtless very necessary, in order to this end, that it should be conducted by prudence and discretion; which ought more particularly to guide and direct our alms, first, In the method of provision of them; secondly, In the choice of the objects of them; thirdly, In the nature and quality of them; fourthly, As to the proportions of them; fifthly, In the manner of bestowing them.

1. We ought to exercise our prudence as to the method of providing our alms. For herein prudence will direct us, not only to be frugal in our expenses, to pare off our superfluities, and to be diligent and industrious in our callings, that we may have to give to them that need; but also out of our incomes and profits to consecrate a considerable proportion to pious and charitable uses. And herein the apostle gives us an excellent rule, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. *Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come:* which though it doth not carry with it a necessary and indispensable obligation, it being impossible for many men to take a weekly account how God hath prospered them, and to lay by accordingly; yet thus far at least it is a very wise direction to us, that as oft as we cast up our accounts, whether it be weekly, monthly, or an-

nually, we should in proportion to our increase devote some convenient share of it, as a private bank or treasury for charitable uses; that so we may not be to seek for alms upon sudden and emergent occasions, but may have a store ready by us, to supply our daily expense and distribution. And if we take care not to alienate or embezzle what we have thus devoted to our private *corban*, we shall always give with cheerfulness, having by us a stock designed to no other end but that of charity.

2. We ought also to exercise our prudence in the choice of the objects of our charity, so as to take care that they be such as do truly need and deserve it. For unless we do so, we shall many times encourage vice, instead of relieving poverty; and be tempted, by the clamorous importunities of idle and vicious persons, to prostitute our alms to their sloth and intemperance. For how often do we see the imprudent charities of well disposed minds poured into those sinks of filthiness, and, like the sacrifices of Bel, devoted to the importunate lusts of a company of idle drones and beggars, that are not so properly the members, as the wens of the body politic, as being utterly useless to all its natural ends, and only serving to deform and bring diseases upon it, and to draw away the nourishment of it from its useful parts and members? Now what a shame and pity is it, that these precious fruits of mercy should be thus abused and misemployed, to pamper a company of devouring vermin, whose business it is to croak about the streets, and wander from door to door, whilst many a poor industrious family, that hath more mouths to feed than hands to work, lies drooping under its wants and necessities? Wherefore

though the former are not to be altogether neglected, when their needs are real and urgent, yet certainly prudence will direct our charity to such persons as have either fallen from riches to poverty, and consequently are less able to toil and drudge for bread, or else to such as are either worn out by labour, or disabled from it by sickness, or oppressed with such a numerous charge of children, as do exceed their utmost industry to maintain. In such good grounds as these, prudence will advise us to sow the main of our charities, and not to throw it away with a careless hand upon the barren rocks and highways, to be devoured by vermin and birds of prey.

3. We ought to exercise our prudence, in determining the nature and quality of our alms. And herein prudence will direct us, to prefer those alms which may serve a poor man for a constant provision, and put him in a fixed way of living, before those which are transient, and do only help in a pang of need; which do just hold him up from perishing for an hour, but do not take him out of the deep waters. Wherefore, if the person to whom we design a relief be fit and able to work, or hath been bred up in any honest occupation, it is a much wiser charity, to provide him an employment, or to contribute towards the setting him up in his trade, than barely to relieve his present necessity; because by this means we relieve him both for the present and the future, and convert our alms into a standing maintenance. Upon which account it is doubtless a very prudent charity to contribute to the erection and maintenance of public workhouses for the poor, where they and their children may be provided with such work as they are capable of; and thereby be

intured to industry, and enabled to support themselves. And as prudent charity prefers such alms as do draw after them a lasting effect and benefit, before such as do only supply a transient necessity; so it also chooses, if it be consistent with convenience, to give its alms in kind rather than in value, to give clothes to the naked, and food to the hungry, physic to the sick, and books to the uninstructed: for though money indeed will answer all these needs, yet we are not sure it will be always laid out upon them.

4. We ought to exercise our prudence also in stating the proportions of our charity; that is, what proportion of our income or increase we ought to devote to charitable uses, and in what proportion we ought to distribute. For as for the first of these, when all is done, every man must be his own casuist: The Jews indeed had a proportion fixed and stated to their hands; for there was a double tithing prescribed to them by the law of Moses, viz. the every year's tithing, which was an annual tenth part of their increase, for the maintenance of their priests and sacred officers; and then there was a third year's tithing, which amounted to the thirtieth part of their increase, and that was devoted for the supply and maintenance of the poor: and if such a proportion were required of the Jews, we may be sure a greater is required of us, whose righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, if ever we mean to enter into the kingdom of God. But since God hath not determined the exact proportions of our charity, it is impossible for us to do it, where there are such different circumstances and abilities in this matter; therefore we must leave men, who best understand their own condition, to

the guidance of their own conscience and discretion; who are in the first place to consider what is requisite to support them in the condition of their birth, their place, or office, or family, and to the discharge of their several obligations. For prudence doth not require of all the same proportions of charity; some may afford a twentieth, others a thirtieth, and to others whose children and dependants are numerous, or whose fortunes are clogged and entangled, the hundredth part may be over-measure. Wherefore according as the heap is, the wise man is to sow and distribute; substracting not only what will support his life, but also what will maintain the decency of his estate and person; and that not only as to present needs, but also as to future necessities and very probable contingencies. But yet in the stating of this matter, it is doubtless much safer to exceed, than to fall short of our due proportions; for as for exceeding, we have many holy persons for our precedents, we have Christ himself for our voucher in the forenamed case of the poor widow, and a vast treasure in heaven for our reward. Wherefore in the determination of this case, Christian prudence will direct us not to be too nice and curious, too fond and partial to ourselves, in stretching our needs and conveniences beyond their just dimensions; but to take easy and moderate measures of them, and to spare what may be decently spared from superfluous servants, idle meetings, unnecessary feasts, and chargeable garments and diversions: and if we thus pare off our needless expense, and lay aside the surplusage for charity, the consequence will be this; the poor will be more plentifully relieved, and ourselves will be more able to do it, and we shall reap more

pleasure and profit from laying out upon the backs and bellies of the poor, than from wasting it on our own vanity. And now having fixed the proportions of your estates for charity, you ought in the next place to advise with your prudence in what proportions to distribute it. And here prudence will direct you to differ in your distributions, according to the different circumstances of those whom you design to relieve by them. To such as are of a lower rank, prudence directs to give by little and little, according to their emergent necessities; yet so as not always to limit your alms to their bare necessities, but sometimes to extend them even to their refreshment and recreation; that so, together with their toil and drudgery, they may now and then enjoy some sabbath for the ease of human nature. But to such whose fortunes are by loss and accident sunk and declined, both decency and mercy requires us to enlarge the proportion of our alms; considering how great a fall it is from plenty to necessity, and consequently how much more is necessary to raise up such dejected creatures, who are so unexperienced to misery, into any degree of comfort or self-enjoyment.

Fifthly and lastly, We ought to exercise our prudence also in the manner of bestowing and conveying our alms; so as that we may oblige both by what we give, and by the way of our giving it. And accordingly prudence will sometimes direct us to search and find out just needs, and prevent the poor from asking, by surprising them with a kindness which they did not look for: by which means we shall strengthen their faith in the providence of God, who thus creates them friends out of the dust,

and brings them supplies without and beyond their expectations. And then in giving, prudence will direct us not to upbraid the want, or insult over the miseries of those we give to; for that would be to feed them with a bit and a knock, and to sophisticate our mercy with cruelty. And when any miserable creature would borrow or beg of us, prudence will advise us not to turn him away with scorn; nor yet to remove him at a distance, with signs of disdain or contemptuous violence; but if we see reason to grant him his request, to do it with ready and open hand, that so the freedom of our charity may raise and enhance the comfort of it; and that that which we design for a relief and succour, may leave no sting behind it in the mind of the receiver. And above all, we ought to take especial care, not to oppress the modesty of the humble, especially of those who have been wont to give, and not to receive; not to relieve them with lofty looks, or angry words, or a scornful and severe behaviour; not to expose their poverty by the divulging our charity, or conveying it to them in the open view of the world; but to hand our relief to them in such a secret and benign, courteous and obliging manner, as that they may receive it with cheerfulness, and without blushing and confusion. And then as for those whose constant necessities have habituated them to ask and receive with more confidence and assurance, our prudence will direct us to convey our alms to them with such a mixture of severity and sweetness, as neither to encourage them to grow upon our charity, nor drive them into desperation of it.

I now proceed to press and enforce the practice of this great duty with some motives and argu-

ments, which are these that follow. First, Alms-giving is imposed upon us as a necessary part of our religion. Secondly, It is recommended to us by the examples of God and of our Saviour. Thirdly, It is a substantial expression of our love and gratitude to God and our Saviour. Fourthly, It charges an high obligation to us upon the accounts of God and our Saviour.

1. Consider that giving alms is imposed upon us as a necessary part of our religion; that is, when God hath furnished us with abilities and opportunities to do it. For where we cannot give money to relieve the poor, our pity and our prayers are accepted for alms: *For if there be a willing mind,* (says the apostle,) that is, a charitable heart, *it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not,* 2 Cor. viii. 12. But where a man hath, it is his indispensable duty to do accordingly; for *pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world,* James i. 27. And that this visitation is to be performed with an open and a liberal hand, the same apostle informs us, James ii. 15, 16. *If a brother or a sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?* That is, if, instead of food and raiment, you only give him fair words and good wishes, what doth it profit him? or what advantage can you expect to reap by it? And to the same purpose, 1 John iii. 17. *But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need,*

and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? That is, let him pretend what he pleases, he hath not one spark of love to God or true religion in his bosom. So that for men to pretend to religion, who are able to relieve the poor, and yet refuse it, is one of the greatest mockeries in the world: for howsoever men's covetousness may bribe their conscience to dispense with the obligations of almsgiving, as if it were only a carnal ordinance or useless relic of popery, a holy cheat, a devout drunkard, a pious fornicator, are not greater contradictions in the sense of scripture, than a hardhearted, a stingy, and a hidebound saint. For though our religion doth by no means warrant us in such a vain and fond opinion of our good works, as to think we merit heaven by them; or to presume to drive a bargain with God, by putting our good works into the balance with an infinite and eternal reward, our hopes of which we wholly owe to the infinite goodness of God through Jesus Christ; yet it requires them of us as a necessary condition, upon which God hath entailed all our future bliss, and without which we can never hope for admittance into the kingdom of God. So that if we are able to relieve the poor, and yet will not when we have opportunity; by shutting up our bowels against them, we shut the door of heaven against ourselves; and must one day expect to receive the same answer from God that we give to them; "I have nothing "for you, no mercy, no heaven for such unmerciful "wretches, as would rather suffer their poor bre-"thren to perish, than part with a penny to relieve "them." For of this doom our Saviour himself hath fairly forewarned us, Matt. xxv. 41, 42, 43. *Go ye*

cursed into everlasting fire: for when I was hungry, ye fed me not: when I was naked, ye clothed me not. So that from any encouragement our religion gives us, we may as well hope to go to heaven without faith and repentance, as without giving of alms according to our ability and opportunity.

2. Consider that giving of alms is highly recommended to us by the examples of God and our Saviour. For as for God, the whole series of his providence is little else but a continued dole of alms and charities to his creatures. It was his charity that founded this vast and magnificent hospital of the world, that stocked it with such a numberless swarm of creatures, and endowed it with such plentiful provisions for the support and maintenance of them all; so that we do all of us live upon his alms, and depend upon his boundless charity, for every breath of air we draw, for every bit of bread we eat, and for every rag of clothes we wear. And indeed what are all the good things of this world, but so many effluxes and arguments of his almighty liberality? Look every where about nature, consider the whole tenor of his providence, survey all the works and actions of his hands, and you shall find them all conspiring in that amiable character the Psalmist gives of him, Psalm cxix. 68. *Thou art good, and thou doest good.* So that in relieving the necessities of others we act the part, and the best part too, of the almighty Father of beings; who sits at the upper end of the table, and carves to his whole creation. Hence St. Gregory Nazianzen, speaking of the charitable man, saith, that he is τῷ ἀτυχοῦντι Θεὸς, τὸν ἔλεον τοῦ Θεοῦ μιμησάμενος, οὐδὲν γὰρ οὕτως ὡς τὸ εὐποιεῖν ἄνθρωπος ἔχει Θεοῦ· i. e. "A God to the unfortunate, imitating the

"mercies of God: for man hath in nothing so much "of God as in doing good;" which is doubtless the most divine and godlike thing that a creature is capable of. What then can be more honourable, or more becoming a creature, than to tread in the footsteps of God, to transcribe his nature and actions, and be a kind of vice-god in the world? Surely did we but understand and consider how divinely magnificent it is to supply the necessities, and contribute to the happiness of others, we should court it as our highest preferment, and bless God upon our bended knees for deeming us worthy of such an illustrious employment, and that among the numerous blessings he hath heaped upon us, he hath vouchsafed to admit us to share with himself in the glory of doing good.

And as the example of God doth highly recommend to us relieving of the poor and miserable, so also doth the example of our Saviour. For it was for this that he left his Father's bosom, and came down from heaven into our nature, that he might relieve a poor perishing world, and rescue it from eternal ruin. And what a glorious recommendation of charity is this, that the Son of God chose rather to do good upon earth than to reign over angels in heaven! And while he was here, the sole employment he thought worthy of himself, was to relieve the miserable, to feed the hungry, to cure the blind and the lame, to restore the sick, to instruct the ignorant, and reclaim the rebellious. This was the drift of all his actions, this the subject of his miracles, and this the scope of all his doctrines: so that his whole life was nothing else but a continued train of beneficences; for the apostle tells us, Acts x. 38. that *he went about doing good.* Consider this

therefore, O thou hardhearted Christian, that stoppest thy ears against the poor man's cries! what would thy blessed Lord have done, had he been in thy case and circumstances? would he, who had so much compassion on the multitude, as to work a miracle to feed them, have turned that miserable wretch away as thou dost, without the least dram of comfort and relief? would he, whose heart and hand was always open to the poor and miserable, have despised the poor man's moans as thou dost, or shut his bowels of compassion against him? Do but peruse the pattern of his life, and scan over his whole behaviour; and see if there be any one action in all that great exemplar, that doth not upbraid thee, and cry shame upon thee, for entitling thy narrow, cruel, and stingy self a disciple to such a merciful, generous, and liberal Master; and, if so, learn for the future either to be so honest as to follow his rule and example, or else so modest as to disclaim thy relation to him.

3. Consider that giving of alms is a most substantial expression of our love and gratitude to God and our Saviour. How much we are obliged to express our gratitude to God for these our outward enjoyments, and abilities to do good to others, is evident from hence; because we receive them from him, and do hold in virtue of his donation. For to suppose ourselves independent possessors of them, is in effect to divest God of his dominion, and to strip him into an insignificant cipher, that only sits above in the heavens, like an almighty Sardanapalus, with his arms folded in his bosom, and no further concerning himself in the affairs of this lower world, than to look down from his throne, and please himself to see men scrambling for their several shares of it. But

if we suppose him, as we have infinite reason to do, the almighty Author and supreme Disposer of all things; then we must acknowledge, that it is from his overflowing bounty that we derive whatever we possess; that it is the gold of his mines that enriches us, the crops of his fields that feed us, the fleeces of his beasts that clothe us, and that every good thing we enjoy is handed to us by the ministry of his all-disposing providence. And since we owe all to his bounty, and in our greatest flourish are but his almsmen and pensioners, how deeply are we obliged to return upon him in the oblations of love and thanksgiving! And since love and gratitude consist either in the affection of the mind, or in the verbal signification of it, or in the effectual performance of good things to the person whom we thank and love; this last is the most complete and substantial expression of the reality of our words and affections. For though good-will is indeed the root of love and gratitude, yet that lying under ground and out of sight, we cannot conclude its being and life without visible fruits of beneficence to the person whom we thank and love: and as for good words, they are at best but the leaves of love and gratitude; but it is good works that are the real fruits of them, by which their sincerity is demonstrated. For as no man doth ever impress a false stamp upon the finest metal, so costly thanks and love are seldom counterfeit. It is to decline spending their goods or their pains that men do so often forge and feign, pretending to make up in wishing well the defects of doing so, and paying down words instead of things: but where works are wanting, there is no expression of our love or gratitude can either be real in itself or acceptable to God.

So that we may spare our breath, if we keep back our substance; for our close hand giveth the lie to our full mouth, and all our verbal praises of God, when we will part with nothing for his sake, are only so many empty compliments and downright mockeries. But then do our love and gratitude to God discover their reality, when it appears by our actions that we think nothing too dear for him; when for his sake who hath fed and clothed us, and abundantly supplied our necessities, we are ready upon all opportunities to feed and clothe and supply the necessities of others. And can we think any thing too dear, by which we may express our gratitude to him, upon whose overflowing bounty we depend for every blessing we have or hope for; who hath provided not only this temporal world for our bodies, but also an eternal heaven for our souls; and hath sent his Son to us from his own bosom to tread out our way to it, and conduct us thither? or can we think any thanks too costly for that blessed Son, who never grudged to come down from heaven into this vale of miseries, and pour out his blood for our sakes? Was it not much harder for him to part with heaven, than it is for you to part with a little money? And can you think it much to bestow an alms for his sake, who never grudged to lay down his life for yours? This is the argument of the apostle, 2 Cor. viii. 9. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.*

4. Consider that giving of alms charges an high obligation to us upon the accounts of God and our Saviour. For God lends the poor man his name, and

allows him to crave our succours for his sake: he gives him credit from himself to us for what he stands in need of, and bids him charge what he receives upon his own account, permitting to reckon himself obliged thereby, and to write him down our debtor: so that when we stop our ears to the cries of the poor, he reckons himself repulsed by us, and interprets it as a rude affront offered to his own person, it being offered to one that bears his name and wears his livery. For the poor man's rags are the badges of his relation to God, and his wants are the mouths by which God himself entreats our relief and succour; assuring us that he will reckon it to ourselves, and accept it as kindly at our hands as if we had relieved him in his own person; *for he that hath pity upon the poor* (saith the Wise Man) *lendeth unto the Lord*, Prov. xix. 17. In which one sentence methinks there is more rhetoric, than in a whole library of sermons: and surely, did we but understand and consider it in its full emphasis, we should not need such volumes of instructions, but might easily learn to be charitable by an epitome; "O blessed God! that thou shouldest own thyself "my debtor, only for repaying thee a part of what "thou hast lent me, and of what is still thy own by "an unalienable propriety; that thou, who art the "great Landlord of the world, shouldest thus acknow-"ledge thyself indebted to thy poor tenant for pay-"ing thee a small quit-rent, a peppercorn of homage "for what I hold in thy right and by thy bounty!" And yet thus it is, he lends us our estates, and then writes himself our debtor for that small part which we repay him in works of piety and charity. And as God puts our alms to his own account, so doth

our Saviour also: for so Matt. xxv. 40. *Inasmuch* (says he) *as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me;* that is, I account myself obliged by it, and do receive it at your hands with the same kindness and acceptance, as if you had been with me in my state of humiliation, and shewed me all this mercy in my own person. And when both God and my Saviour do send a poor wretch to me in their own name and person, and desire me for their sakes and upon their accounts to relieve him, can I be either so ungrateful to them, to whom I am indebted for all that I have or do hope for, or so wanting to my own interest, as to neglect so fair an opportunity of making them some return of their favours, and thereby obliging them to heap more favours upon me? For when in giving to the poor I give to God and my Saviour, what glorious compensations may I expect from such kind and liberal paymasters! *He that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully,* says the apostle, speaking of alms, 2 Cor. ix. 6. for he sows in the richest soil, in the fruitful hands of God and his Saviour; where the seed being nourished with infinite bounty, never fails to increase and multiply a thousandfold. *For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed towards his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister,* Heb. vi. 10. Though he may sometimes defer, yet he never forgets to return a charitable work: so that you may safely reckon upon it, that so much as you have bestowed in works of charity, so much, with vast increase and interest, you have secured to you in the hands of God; who will either return it to you hither in temporal

blessings, or, which is a thousand times better, repay it to you with infinite interest in the weight of your eternal crown. For so our Saviour promises the young man, that if he would give what he had to the poor, he should have *treasure in heaven*, Matt. xix. 21. So that by giving alms we make earth tributary to heaven, and, in a nobler sense than the new system of astronomy teaches, advance it into a celestial body; and consequently enrich not only ourselves, but our wealth too, by thus transmitting it to heaven before us, as it were by bills of exchange, to be repaid us when we come there in an everlasting treasure of happiness. And when by relieving the poor man's needs, we may thus transmute our dross into gold, and, which is more, our perishing gold into immortal glory, what man in his wits would refuse any fair opportunity of making such a blessed exchange?

CHAP. IV.

Of the eternal reasons and grounds of mercy.

HAVING shewn at large what mercy is, and to what particular duties it extends, I shall now proceed to the second thing, viz. the eternal reasons upon which it is founded and rendered morally good. Which I shall reduce to these five particulars:

First, The suitableness of it to the nature of God.

Secondly, The convenience of it with the frame and constitution of human nature.

Thirdly, The near and intimate relation of those persons to us upon whom our mercy is to be exercised.

Fourthly, The equitableness of it to our own state and circumstances.

Fifthly, The necessity of it to the tolerable well-being of human society.

1. One eternal reason upon which mercy is founded, and rendered morally good, is the suitableness of it to the nature of God; which, abounding as it doth with all the possible kinds and degrees of perfection, is an infinitely full and everlasting fountain of happiness to itself; so that it cannot wish for any kind or any degree of blessedness beyond the enjoyment of itself, and those infinite complacencies it takes in its own essential beauties and perfections: and having such an inexhaustible treasure of happiness within itself, it can have no need of, or dependance upon any thing without it; nor consequently be liable to any temptation to oppress, or render others miserable, either for the security or augmentation of its own revenues: and as he who is infinitely happy can have no temptation to render others miserable, so his own happiness cannot but incline him to render the miserable happy. For so from a natural principle of self-love, every being stands inclined to beget and propagate its own likeness; and consequently every being that is happy cannot but be inclined to make others so, so far as it consists with its own interest. Since therefore God is not only happy in himself, but so securely happy, as that he can contribute what he pleases to the happiness of others without any prejudice to his own; his own self-love must necessarily incline him to beget his own likeness on his creatures, and so propagate his happiness through the world. And being thus inclined by his own self-love to transform all other beings into his

likeness, that is, to make them happy as he is happy; he must needs be tenderly affected with the miseries of his creatures, and immutably inclined, so far as it is just and wise, to succour and relieve, and render them happy. Thus mercy, you see, which is a good-will to the miserable, doth most necessarily result from God's own self-love; and consequently is an inseparable principle of his nature: and accordingly God proclaims himself to Moses, Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7. *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious; longsuffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgressions:* and hence his mercy is said to be *everlasting*, Psalm c. 5. and to be *from everlasting*, Psalm ciii. 17. and to *endure for ever*, Psalm cvi. 1. and he is said to be *rich in mercy*, Ephes. ii. 4. and is styled *the God of all grace*, 1 Pet. v. 10. and the *Father of mercies*, 2 Cor. i. 3. Now the nature of God is the supreme example and pattern of all rational natures; and so far forth as ours do swerve and deflect from his, they are maimed and imperfect. For his will is our law, not merely because it is his will, but because it is overruled by the infinite perfections of his nature, by his wisdom and justice, his mercy and goodness; which if, upon an impossible supposition, he should will contrary to, that will would be no law, i. e. it would have no force upon our consciences to oblige us to obey it. So that the supreme law is the nature of God, by which his will is, and all other wills ought to be, concluded and determined; and whatsoever we discover in his nature, either by reason or revelation, that is communicable to ours, we ought to follow and imitate it as our sovereign pattern and exemplar. Since

therefore both reason and revelation do so plainly discover a most merciful inclination in the nature of God; this is an everlasting reason why we should be merciful: and this is the reason our Saviour urges, Luke vi. 36. *Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful;* that is, Let it be seen that you are the children of God, by your participation of his nature, which is infinitely benevolent to the miserable; for there is nothing sinks you farther from God, or renders you more unlike him, than a cruel and unmerciful temper: it is this that blackens and deforms your souls, that wreaths and distorts them into a contrary figure, to the most amiable nature of the Father of spirits. For as the highest perfection is the nature of God, and that is a most merciful one; so the lowest imperfection is the nature of devils, and that is a most cruel one: and therefore as by mercy we incline towards the nature of God, which is the landmark we ought to follow; so by cruelty we decline towards the nature of devils, which is the seamark we ought to avoid.

2. Another eternal reason upon which mercy is founded and rendered morally good, is the convenience of it with the frame and constitution of human nature; in which the wise Author of nature hath implanted a natural sympathy between those that partake of it in each other's pains and pleasures. So that though the human nature be largely diffused and spread through infinite numbers of individuals, which by vast distances of time and place are separated from one another; yet as if it were but all one common soul, operating in several bodies in several times and places, it feels almost in every one body what it enjoys or suffers in every other; and whe-

ther it be pleased or offended in one individual, is pleased or offended in them all: and though the sense be quickest in that individual part or member of human nature, upon which the pain or pleasure strikes immediately; yet all the rest, how distant soever in time or place, as soon as they have notice of it, are sensibly touched and affected with it. For thus when we read or hear of the calamities of other men, our bowels yearn by a natural sympathy, though they are never so distant from us, and are no otherwise related to us than as they partake of our natures; and though they are long since dead, and out of the reach of any assistance, yet their miseries, without any motives of reason or discourse, strike us into a soft compassion; yea, though we know the calamities which we read or hear of to be nothing but romantic fictions, yet the very imagination of them is ready to melt us into tears, in despite of our will and our reason. Nor is this visible only in persons that are adult, but even in little children; who, as soon as they are capable of taking notice of things, do without any reason express themselves pained and afflicted with the dissembled griefs and sufferings of those that attend them. All which are most evident instances of that general sympathy, which naturally intercedes between all men; since we can neither see, nor hear of, nor imagine another's miseries, without being touched with a sensible pain and affliction.

Against which I know no other objection can be urged but this; that there are sundry instances of men, who seem to have arrived to that degree of cruelty, as to take pleasure in afflicting others; and are so far from sympathizing with their pains,

that they rather seem to be recreated with them. To which I shall only answer these two things: First, That that delight which some men take in plaguing and afflicting others proceeds not from their natural temper, but is rather to be attributed to some violent effervescency and transport of their nature; such as are outrageous anger, or deep and inveterate revenge; under both which nature is discomposed and disordered, and chafed into a preternatural ferment: and accordingly when it is cooled again, and reduced to a composed temper, instead of rejoicing in the mischiefs it hath done, it usually bewails and laments them, and reflects upon them with a great deal of horror and remorse. Which is a plain argument, that human nature in itself is very tender and compassionate, how much soever it may be accidentally transported, by unnatural passion superinduced upon it. Secondly, Suppose what is objected be true, that there are some natures so cankered and diabolized as to be really pleased with the pains and miseries of others; the instances of this kind are so few, that they are only so many exceptions to a general rule; and therefore ought rather to be looked upon as so many monsters of men, than as the standards of human nature. For as we do not look upon it as natural to men to be born without hands or feet, though there have been instances of such monstrous and unnatural births; so neither ought we to think it natural to men to be cruel and unmerciful, because of a few devils in human shape, that have pulled out their own bowels of compassion. If we would understand what is human and natural, we must take our measures

from those who in all other cases do live most conformably to the laws of nature; and to be sure the more regular men's natures are, the more you will find them abounding with pity and compassion. For hence it is that mercy and compassion are called *good-nature* and *humanity*, and their contraries *ill-nature* and *inhumanity*, because as the former are inseparable properties of well-formed and regulated natures; so the latter are such hideous deformities of nature, as do in effect divest us of our manhood, and render us a kind of monsters among men. By all which it is evident, that the great Creator hath framed and composed our nature to mercy, and implanted in it a tender sympathy and fellow-feeling of each other's miseries; by which, as by a voice from heaven, he doth eternally call upon us to let out these our natural compassions into acts of mercy towards one another. For the voice of nature is a genuine echo and repetition of the voice of God; who, by creating in us such a tender sympathy with one another, doth most expressly signify that it is his will that we should mutually succour and relieve each other. For to what other end should he create in me such a feeling of my brother's miseries, but only to provoke me by it to ease and succour him? Why should he cause me to partake, as I do, of other men's pains and pleasures, but to excite me thereby to use my best endeavour to assuage their pains and advance their pleasures? Since therefore the God of nature hath made my neighbour's misery my pain, and his content my pleasure; and by the indissoluble bands of mutual sympathy hath linked our fortunes and affections together, so that it is for my own ease

to ease him, and for my own pleasure to please him; this is an eternal and immutable reason why I should be merciful to him.

3. Another eternal reason upon which mercy is founded, and by which it is constituted morally good, is the near and intimate relation of those persons to us, upon whom our mercy is to be exercised. For there is between men and men a most intimate kindred and relation; as being all derived from one common root, whose prolific sap hath sprouted into infinite branches, which, like the boughs of Nebuchadnezzar's tree, have spread themselves to all the ends of the earth. And as we are all children of the same parents, and consequently brethren by nature; so we do all communicate of the same nature, as being compounded of the same materials, and animated with the same forms, having all the same faculties, inclinations, appetites, and affections; and being only so many several copies, transcribed from the same original: and there is no other difference between us, but what is made by things that are extrinsic and accidental to our natures. So that in short we are all but one and the same substance, attired in a diverse garb of circumstances, divided into several times and places, and diversified by the little accidents of colour and stature, figure and proportions: in all which perhaps within a little while we shall differ as much from ourselves, as we do now from other men. For do but compare yourselves in your youth, or in your health, or in your prosperity, with yourselves in your age, or in your sickness, or in your adversity; and you will find as much difference between yourselves and yourselves, as you do now between yourselves and others: so that in reality other men are as much

you now, as you are yourselves in other circumstances; we being all the same in every stable, essential ingredient of our natures, and being only diversified by such accidents from one another, as will in a little time diversify us from ourselves. Thus the apostle says, Acts xvii. 26. *He hath made of one blood*, that is, of one nature, *all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth.* There being therefore such a close conjunction, such a strict union of natures between men and men, so that every other man is every other man's self, a few trifling circumstances excepted; this is an everlasting reason why we should treat them as we do ourselves, with all compassion and humanity. For to commiserate one who is my other self, is that which I am obliged to by my own self-love, which God hath made an eternal law to my nature: it is to feed a member of my own body, and nourish a branch of my own root; yea, it is to feed and succour my own nature, that is only individuate from mine by I know not what metaphysical principle, and clothed in different accidents and circumstances. So that now the very same self-love, which doth so importunately instigate us upon all occasions to redress our own miseries, ought in all reason to provoke us to relieve and succour other men; since all the miseries they endure are the miseries of our own nature: insomuch that we run their fortunes, and by a natural communion are partakers of their pains and pleasures. For the human nature which is common to us and them endures the smart of their afflictions, and bleeds through every wound that is given them; so that by pouring into those wounds the balsam of our mercy, we do an act of kindness to ourselves, and wisely consult

our own preservation. As on the contrary, by dealing cruelly and unmercifully by other men, we do affront and violate our own natures; and most unnaturally thwart that principle of self-love which God hath implanted in us for our own preservation. For he whom thou treatest with so much contempt and cruelty is thy own self individuated into another person, and wears thy nature under other circumstances: he is man of thy manhood, flesh of thy flesh, and bone of thy bone; and *no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it*, Eph. v. 29. Wherefore thou canst not deal cruelly by him, without wounding thyself through his sides, and committing an unnatural outrage upon the human nature, whereof he is equally partaker with thee.

4. Another eternal reason upon which mercy is founded and rendered morally good, is the equitableness of it to our own state and circumstances: for no man ever was or ever can be so happy, as not to have need of mercy for himself. The best of men are sinners before God, and for that are liable without a world of mercy to be rendered miserable for ever; and there are very few whose conversations with men have been so inoffensive, as never to have merited severe retributions at their hand: and how happy and prosperous soever a man's outward state and circumstances may be at present, he cannot be secure, but the next turn of affairs may tumble him headlong thence into wretchedness and calamity. Now since every man might have been or may be miserable, what can be more just or equitable, than that we should deal with those that are so, as we would be dealt by if we were so? Put the case then,

as you may very reasonably do, that you were now as miserable as that wretched creature is that craves your succour and relief; would not you desire relief with the same importunity that he doth? Doubtless you would; the sense of misery and the desire of mercy being naturally inseparable. Well, but why would you desire it? why, because you are miserable, you would say. And hath not he the same reason to desire it of you? You may want what he desires, and if you should, you cannot deny but you should desire the same: and is there not all the reason in the world why you should grant him what you would ask for yourself, if you were in his circumstances and he in yours? This therefore is eternally reasonable, that we should give and ask by the same measures; that we should grant that succour to those that are miserable, which we should think fit to ask or desire of them, were we as miserable as they, and they as happy as we. For since we are all of us naturally equal, whatsoever is fit for one, must be fit for another in equal circumstances. Either therefore it is not fit that I should desire relief from others when I am miserable, or else it is fit that I should grant relief to others when they are so: which if I refuse, I must condemn myself, either for being unreasonable in desiring mercy when I need it, or for being unjust in denying mercy when I am asked it. I know I may be miserable myself; and if ever I am, I know I cannot forbear desiring others to succour and relieve me: and can I blame them for desiring that of me, which I could not forbear desiring of them, were I in their circumstances and they in mine? And yet of necessity I must either blame them for desiring of me what they do, or

blame myself for refusing them what they desire; since whatsoever is just for them to desire of me, is very fit and reasonable for me to grant them: and if ever I should happen to want relief, with what face can I desire or expect it, who am deaf and inexorable to the wants of others? So that if I will shew no mercy, I were best take heed that I never need any, for if I should, it will be very unreasonable for me to expect it; because by my unmerciful treatment of others, I have made a precedent against myself; against which it would be impudence for me to plead for mercy, either with God or men. With what face can I supplicate for mercy from the hands of others, when I have so plainly declared by my actions, that were I in their stead, and they in mine, I would never grant them what I ask for? And when my actions do thus loudly deprecate the mercies which I pray for, and enter such an unanswerable caveat against my claim and pretence to them, it is but modest to let fall my suit, and give up my hope of mercy for ever.

Fifthly and lastly, Another eternal reason upon which mercy is founded and rendered morally good, is the necessity of it to the tolerable well-being of human societies. That God is good and merciful to his creatures, hath been sufficiently demonstrated from the infinite beatitude of his nature; which being an unbounded ocean of bliss and happiness to itself, must needs be abundantly communicative of bliss and happiness to others, according to the capacities of their natures. Since therefore human nature, of all these sublunary ones, contains the largest capacities of happiness; we may be sure that God not only designs its welfare, but that he

hath made all the provisions for it that are necessary in order thereunto. Notwithstanding which, you see he hath at present exposed it to so many evil accidents and contingencies, that unless those that are happy will take some care of the miserable, and we will all of us mutually succour and relieve one another, there is not a sufficient provision made for our tolerable well-being in this world. Since therefore it is evident even from the eternal principles of God's nature, that he is so infinitely kind and benevolent to us; and yet notwithstanding this, he hath placed us in a condition wherein we need one another's mercy, and cannot be happy without it; it necessarily follows, that it is his will and pleasure that whereinsoever he hath left us unprovided, we should mutually provide for one another; and that our own mercy should be instead of a counterpart to supply those defects and void spaces, which his providence hath left us in our present happiness. For we being free agents, God did not so provide for our happiness as to exclude our own virtue from having an hand in it; but hath only taken care so to dispose and order our affairs, as that we may be happy; if we will contribute our part, and behave ourselves towards him, ourselves, and one another, so as is most conducive to our own and one another's welfare. Since therefore he designs that all should be happy, and in order thereunto, though he hath not actually made them so, yet hath fairly provided that all may be so; it is plain that he hath left something to be done on our part, and expects we should every one contribute what we are able towards every other man's happiness. When therefore God places another's happi-

ness, or any degree of it, within the power of my mercy, it is plain that it is with an intent I should employ that power to make him happy; and consequently that if I lavish out upon my own pleasures and conveniencies that power to relieve the miserable with which he hath intrusted me, and so permit them to continue miserable, I am an unfaithful steward to his trust, and responsible to him for all their miseries. In short, since God by the eternal bent and inclination of his nature aims at and intends our happiness; but yet hath put us into a condition, wherein without the assistance of each other's mercy we cannot be tolerably happy; this is a plain demonstration, that it is his will we should assist and further his intention, by being merciful to one another. Whilst therefore God permits misery in one, that is an immutable reason why he should exact mercy from another; since without that he can never obtain his end, which is, the happiness of all. For, as since by the laws of generation he hath ordered all men to come into the world weak and helpless, and unable to provide for themselves; he was bound in goodness to oblige their parents by a natural στοργὴ and affection, to nourish and take care of them, until they grow able to take care for themselves, that so they might not be utterly abandoned: so since he hath thought good to expose us here to so many miseries and calamities, he stood obliged by the eternal benignity of his nature, to oblige us by all the bowels of mercy to succour and relieve one another, until we are grown up to that perfection of happiness wherein we shall have no more need of succour; that so at present we may not be left destitute and forlorn,

but may find all that relief in one another's mercy, which is wanting to us in his immediate providence. For it is for wise and merciful ends that he permits us to be miserable here, to correct our follies, and polish and cultivate our nature, and train us up under a severe discipline into a state of everlasting happiness; and therefore for the redress of these miseries, which for our good he is fain to inflict upon us, it was necessary he should consign us to the protection of one another's mercy: that so this for the present might be a cordial to our griefs, a supply to our wants, an ease to our oppressions, and a sanctuary to our calamities; till misery hath effected the gracious end she designed it for, and then he will release our mercy from its work, and permit it to enjoy an everlasting sabbath. But so long as he thinks fit to continue us in this state of misery, his own benignity will oblige him to oblige us to assist and comfort one another, by the mutual exercise of our mercy; that so being instead of gods to one another, we may not be utterly abandoned to wretchedness; but by mutually succouring each other might all of us be tolerably happy: which we should all of us most certainly be, were we but so benign and merciful to one another, as he expects and requires.

CHAP. I.

Of the nature of mortification.

GOD having made us free agents, and planted in our natures an uncontrolable liberty of choice; in wisdom he hath so ordered and disposed things,

that as we cannot be miserable unless we will, so neither shall we be happy whether we will or no. For as his goodness would not suffer him to make us necessarily miserable, so neither would his wisdom permit him to entail our happiness on our natures, and make it inseparable to our beings; for should he have done so, he must have altered the laws of his own wise creation, and made those beings to act necessarily, which he made to act freely. For happiness is the end of all our actions; and therefore should God have made that necessary to us, he must have made us to act towards it with the same necessity as inanimate bodies do towards their proper centre; and consequently there would have been no such thing as a free agent in the lower world. That we may always act therefore according to the condition and frame of a free nature, the foundations of all our happiness and misery are laid in the right use or abuse of our liberty, and do immediately spring out of the wisdom or folly of our own choices: so that if we choose wisely, according to the laws of virtue and right reason, we do thereby advance towards that happy and heavenly state we were created for; as on the contrary, if we choose foolishly, according to the rash counsels of our own vicious appetites and sensual inclinations, we thereby sink ourselves deeper and deeper towards the abyss of endless and inconceivable misery. For such is the frame and constitution of our natures, that we cannot be good and miserable, nor vicious and happy; and accordingly the apostle sets before us the inevitable fate of our own actions, Rom. viii. 13. *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but*

if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

What these deeds of the flesh, or body, are, the apostle tells us, Gal. v. 19, 20, 21. *The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: and they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* This is the muster-roll of that formidable army of wickednesses with which we are to engage, and which we must vanquish, or perish for ever. *If ye mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live;* i. e. if ye kill and destroy them, if ye wholly cease from them, both as to the outward act of them, and the inward appetite and inclination towards them: for mortification doth not only consist in a formal abstinence from the outward acts of sin, or a superficial skinning over the orifice of its wounds; but searches to the very bottom of that putrid core within, and eats out the inward corruption from whence those outward blisters arise: it purges the heart as well as the hands, and drains those impure inclinations, which are the springs of all impiety and wickedness.

But to handle this subject more particularly, I shall do three things:

First, Shew wherein mortification consists.

Secondly, What are the proper instruments of it.

Thirdly, What are the most prevailing motives of it.

I. Wherein doth mortification consist? I answer in these three things: 1. In abstinence from the

outward acts of sin. 2. In not consenting unto any sin. 3. In a constant endeavour to extinguish our involuntary sins.

1. Mortification requires abstinence from the outward acts of sin: for it is impossible that any man should mortify his lusts, while he indulges himself in the free practice of them; because practice is the fuel that foments and feeds the inward vicious inclinations, and both pampers and enrages the lustful appetite of the soul. For that delight which we reap from acting our own concupiscences doth but increase and provoke them; it being natural to men, when they have been pleased with any action, to be more vehemently inclined to repeat it; the delight which they found in the former enjoyment provoking their desires to enjoy it again. So that we may as well hope to put out a fire by a continual feeding it with fuel, and blowing it into flame; as to mortify a lust, whilst by our continued practising it we nurse and cherish it, and do at once both feed and irritate its flames. If therefore we would ever mortify the lusts of the flesh, we must strictly restrain ourselves from all outward acts of them: for whilst we indulge ourselves in these, we feed our disease, and pamper our bad inclinations into vicious habits, and our vicious habits into sinful necessities.

2. Mortification consists in the dissent of our wills from all sinful proposals. It is no piece of mortification for a man to abstain only from the outward acts of sin, if in the mean time his will is so far consenting to it, as that he would practise it, were it not for some intervening hinderances, or for want of a fair opportunity. For in the eye of God,

to whom our inmost thoughts and purposes are all open and unmasked, the will to sin is the sin that is willed, though it should never proceed into action: with him it is acted as soon as it is conceived, and it is conceived as soon as ever it is thought of with consent: it grows in the delight we take in the speculation of it, but is ripened in the resolution of committing it. For when once we are resolved upon it, our heart hath done its utmost towards it; and so our consenting to it makes it perfect sin, though it should never break out into action. So that it is nonsense to talk of mortifying our sin, while it hath the consent of our wills; for though it is more dangerous in the action, and approaches nearer to a habit, because the consent continues all the while we commit it, and is confirmed by the pleasure we reap in the commission; yet still it is sin, though it is only consented to; and it lives in the purpose, though it breathes not out into the practice. Our enemy is not conquered, when it is only shut up within its hold; and it doth but fortify itself within, while it wants opportunities to sally out into action. If we do not sin only because we cannot, or because we want opportunity, we are but devils in chains, and are never the less guilty, because we cannot do as much mischief as we would: for he that would sin if he could, hath sinned already as far as he is able, and so is every whit as criminal in the account of God, as he that doth sin when he can. The mortification of our lusts therefore doth necessarily imply the withdrawing the consent of our wills from them, and the final divorcing them from the embraces of our choice; for while they enjoy

our consent, they live in us, and rule us, though they should never have the opportunity to come abroad into our practice.

3. Mortification consists in a constant endeavour to subdue our involuntary appetites and inclinations to sin. It is not sufficient that we do not practise sin, nor consent to the practice of it; but we must make it our constant endeavour to wean and abstract ourselves from those evil tendencies and inclinations which we have contracted by our former sins: for though these inclinations remaining in us are no farther our sin than we do yield and consent to them, yet, while we patiently harbour them within our bosoms, and do not honestly endeavour to smother and extinguish them, they are chosen and voluntary, and have the very bane and formality of sin in them. Though we should be disabled from acts of adultery, yet while we retain with delight our inclinations towards it, and quietly please ourselves in the fantastic joys of it; while we freely entertain its lewd and filthy ideas, and suffer them to walk to and fro upon the stage of our fancies without check or control, we are still adulterous in the sight of God, to whom our lust is as obvious within the closet of our minds, as upon the theatre of our practice. We must not think therefore that our sin is mortified, because we neither practise nor consent to the practice of it; for while we have any inclinations to sin remaining in us, we must endeavour to subdue and conquer them: if we do not, we have only forced our enemy into his last retreat, where by our own neglect we give him opportunity to rally and reinforce himself against us: for our sin still lives in our inclination to sin, and will soon,

if it be not beaten thence, recover its broken forces, and grow as formidable as ever. It is true, he that doth not consent to his own evil appetites, but constantly denies them those vicious gratifications which they crave, takes an infallible course to starve and destroy them: for as these were first raised in us, and afterwards nourished into nature by our vicious practices; so by refusing to practise those sins which they incline us to, and by practising the contrary virtues, we shall by degrees abate the strength and vigour of them: and as they decay, so holy inclinations will spring up in their room; which being heightened and made intense by a constant practice of holiness, will by degrees expel these our vicious inclinations, and grow into nature and habit. But merely to abstain from the outward acts of sin is a tedious way of mortifying our inward inclinations towards it; for vicious appetites will live a great while even upon innocent gratifications. Though we should be drunk no more, yet if we indulge ourselves the utmost liberties of sobriety, that will continue our appetite to intemperance: though we should abstain from all outward acts of lasciviousness, yet unless we deny ourselves some of the lawful pleasures of the body, these will foment our wanton inclinations: though we should not suffer our rage and spite and malice to express themselves in any prohibited actions, yet if we allow ourselves even in lawful anger, and just resentments of injuries, this will for a great while preserve and keep alive our most black and devilish propensions. And besides that this way of abstaining merely from sin will make the business of mortification tedious, it is also full of hazard and difficulty: for he that only

abstains from sin, and gratifies his inclinations as far as lawfully he may, is every moment in danger of exceeding the line that parts the utmost of what is lawful from the nearmost of what is sinful. For inclination, like all other motions, is always swiftest when it is nearest its centre; and when once it is within the reach and attraction of its beloved vice, then it hurries towards it with fury and impatience; insomuch that many times our conscience proves too weak to stop the course of its impetuous motions: and then, when once it hath tasted the forbidden pleasure of its sin, it immediately recovers all its impaired strength, and many times grows more fell and outrageous than ever; and so the ground we got in a month's abstinence from our sin, we lose again in a moment's enjoying it; by which means the work of mortification becomes extremely difficult and hazardous. Wherefore, if ever we mean to conquer our bad inclinations, we must not only abstain from the sins we are inclined to, but also from the occasions of them. If it be sensuality, we must starve it out by prudent fasting and abstinence; if devilishness, we must force it out by thwarting and contradicting it in the course of our practice, and keep at the greatest distance from it: for evil inclinations are not to be mortified without force and violence, and, like crooked staves, the speediest way to make them straight is to keep them bent for a while the contrary way. This therefore is implied in our honest endeavour to mortify our involuntary inclinations to sin, that we do not only forbear the sin itself, but avoid the occasions that lead to it; and deny ourselves those lawful liberties which do nearly approach it, and set us upon the brink of it. And thus

you see wherein mortification consists; namely, in abstaining from the outward act and inward consent to sin, and in a constant endeavour to mortify those involuntary inclinations to sin, which we have contracted in any former course of wilful sinning.

CHAP. II.

Of the means and instruments of mortification.

HAVING explained wherein mortification consists, I proceed in the next place to consider what are the means and instruments of it; and these are chiefly these six:

First, Faith.
Secondly, Consideration.
Thirdly, Resolution.
Fourthly, Discipline.
Fifthly, Frequent receiving of the sacrament.
Sixthly, Constant prayer.

I. Faith, or a thorough belief of the truth of our religion; which will furnish us with such arguments against our lusts, as all the temptations they can muster up will never be able to resist. Hence St. John tells us, that *this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith*, 1 Epist. v. 4. where by *the world* we are to understand all those temptations to sin that do arise from these outward worldly objects wherewithal we are here surrounded. Faith therefore must needs be a mighty instrument of mortifying our sins, it being the victory whereby we overcome all the temptations to them: and indeed a firm belief of the mighty arguments of Christianity is in itself such an efficacious means to dissuade us from

sinning, that one would think it were impossible for the most bold and resolute sinner to withstand it. For who but a madman would prostitute himself to the charms and flatteries of a base lust, that believes that promise which proposes a heaven of immortal joys to dissuade him from it? Who would be frighted into any sin by the most amazing danger that can threaten or befall him, that credits that threat which denounces a hell of endless and intolerable woes against every wilful transgression? Did we but believe that it cost the Son of God his dearest blood to redeem us from our sins, how could we be so disingenuous to our best friend, as to harbour those lusts that were his murderers, and which he abhors more than the spear that pierced his side, or the nails that gored his hands and feet? Yea, how could we be so foolhardy as to dally with those sins which are so infinitely odious unto God, that he would not be atoned for them by any meaner sacrifice than the blood of his own Son? In a word, did we but believe that we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, to give a strict account for whatsoever we have done in the flesh, what temptation could there be great enough to balance our fear of that dreadful tribunal? Doubtless, did we but heartily believe our holy religion, there is nothing in all the world would be so terrible as sin to us; the mighty arguments of the gospel would so overawe us, that we should not be able to think of it without horror and amazement; the very sight of it would scare us like an apparition, and cause us to run away from it in as great a fright as if the Devil himself were at our heels. For, Lord! can I be so stupid as to hug my lusts, while I believe that I shall rue for it to all eternity? Can I be so

senseless of my own interest, as to treat and entertain those vices which I verily believe will rob me of all that an everlasting heaven means? No, no; did I but believe the propositions of the gospel, doubtless I should sooner trust my body among ravenous cannibals, than my soul among my sins; and think myself much safer among vipers and scorpions, than in the embraces of my lusts, which, whilst they wrap themselves in amorous folds about me, sting me with an everlasting venom. But our misery is, that we are most of us Christians by chance, and have taken up our religion upon trust, without ever satisfying ourselves of its credibility, or troubling ourselves to inquire why or wherefore we profess it: so that though perhaps we do not absolutely disbelieve, yet neither can we be properly said to believe it; it being a matter we never troubled ourselves about, so as to inquire whether it be true or false; and therefore it is no great wonder that it hath so little effect upon us. For how can it be expected, that we should be affected with that which we do not believe; or be persuaded to part with those lusts that are so dear to us upon proposals that we give no credit to, and of whose truth or falsehood we never troubled ourselves to inquire. Let us therefore but satisfy our own reason of the truth of our religion, by considering impartially those mighty evidences it is founded upon; and then it will soon captivate our souls into the love and obedience of it; and none of our lusts will be able to withstand its mighty force and efficacy, but will all be forced to fall down before it, as Dagon did before the ark of the Lord. This therefore is the first instrument of mortification, viz. a hearty belief of the Christian religion.

II. Another instrument of mortification is consideration. For we have no other way to mortify our lusts, but only by reason and argument, and it is impossible that any arguments should persuade us, unless we duly consider the strength and force of them. It is true our religion furnishes us with sufficient arguments to baffle all the temptations of sin: but what will it signify to have good arguments in our Bibles, while they are out of our thoughts, and are not at all regarded by us? Do we expect they should cure our souls, as charms and amulets do our bodies, merely by being written upon paper, and worn in our bosoms? Why then may they not as well charm a swine into cleanliness, or a savage tiger out of his natural fierceness and cruelty? But, alas! all the arguments in the world to an inconsiderate mind are but like so many arrows shot against an anvil, where they cannot stick, but are forced to rebound and fly off again without making any impression on it. And hence in the parable of the seed, the reason which our Saviour assigns why it prospered not in the highway, the stony, and thorny ground, was, either that they considered not at all, or not enough, Matt. xiii. 19—22. either they were wholly inconsiderate, so that the seed of God's word lay scattered upon the surface of their minds, like corn upon the highway, to be picked and devoured by the fowls of the air; or they considered but a little, so that the divine seed being not throughly rooted in them, produced only a present fit and pang of religion, which in the heat of the next temptation withered and died away; or else they considered but by halves, their minds being all overgrown with worldly cares and thoughts, which quickly choked that holy

seed, and rendered it barren and unfruitful. Thus inconsideration, you see, will render the most powerful motives insignificant; and it will be to no purpose for religion to knock at the door of our souls, while our reason is asleep, and our understandings deaf to its importunities. But would we be but so true to our own interest, as to inure ourselves to a thorough consideration of our religion, that would arm us with such invincible arguments, as none of our lusts would be able to withstand; and we should have so many good thoughts, like guardian angels, perpetually encamped about us, that whensoever the Devil or the world besieged us, they would find our souls impregnably fortified against all their batteries. If in the morning, before we go into the world, we would sit down a while, and take a little pains to antidote our souls with such thoughts as these; "O my "soul! now am I going into the midst of a crowd of "temptations, where ever and anon one bad object "or other will be beckoning to me, and inviting me "unto that which is evil; let us therefore consider "a little what answer we shall return to all their "importunities. By and by perhaps some great op-"portunity of gain may present itself before thee, to "tempt thee to a fraud or cozenage; but, alas! what "a poor recompense will a little money be for all "that eternity of misery whereunto I shall consign "myself by it! Can I carry this sorry pelf thither "with me? or, if I could, can I bribe my flames or "corrupt my tormentors with it? and shall I for "such a trifling momentary gain incur such an ever-"lasting damage? When I have thus answered this "temptation, perhaps immediately after some amor-"ous object may present itself, to court me to the

" harlot's bed: but, O my soul! will the pleasures I
" am promised there compensate the loss of all that
" heaven of immortal joys which I shall forfeit by
" it? and if they will not, as doubtless they will not;
" shall I be so childish, as for the pleasures of a mo-
" ment to extinguish all my hope of being pleased
" for ever? And when thou hast thus baffled this
" temptation, perhaps thou mayest be solicited anew
" with some importunate invitation to intemperance;
" but, O my soul! remember the bitter agonies that
" thy Saviour endured upon the score of thy sins;
" how this among the rest filled his deadly cup, and
" vomited it full of gall and vinegar: and can I be
" so senseless as to make light of any sin, the guilt
" whereof was so heavy as to crush the Lord of life
" into his grave? shall I be so disingenuous as to
" gratify any lust that had a hand in the murder of
" my dearest Saviour, my Saviour who loves me
" a thousand times better than I love myself?
" And now no sooner hast thou repulsed this tempt-
" ation, but perhaps some other may assault thee;
" thou mayest be presented with a favourable op-
" portunity of treating thy lusts so privately and se-
" curely, as that no eye shall discover thee; and
" then how difficult will it be for thee to refuse such
" an inviting occasion: but consider, O my soul!
" thou art always and every where under the in-
" spection of thy Judge, by whose righteous doom
" thou must stand or fall for ever; and he that sees
" what thou dost in private will one day call thee
" to account, and openly unmask all thy actions, and
" present them barefaced upon the public theatre
" before all the world of spirits: unless therefore
" thou couldst find a place to be wicked in where

"God might not see thee, it is in vain to promise "thyself coverts and retirements; for he will one "day bring to light all thy deeds of darkness, and "display thy shame to the open view of the world." Would we, I say, but take the pains every morning, before we enter into the world, to season and antidote our souls with such meditations as these, it would doubtless mightily contribute to the mortification of our lusts. For this would make the arguments of our religion so familiar to us, that no temptations whatsoever would be able to baffle our resolutions; which being backed with such a strength of reason, would stand like a rock of adamant, outbraving the fury of those waves that dash themselves against it, and forcing them to retire, after all their threatening rage, in empty and insignificant foams. For what temptation can be too hard for that soul that is armed with the hope of heaven and the fear of hell, and is furnished with arguments from all the quarters of reason and religion to oppose against it? This therefore is another of those means and instruments by which we are to mortify our lusts; viz. a serious consideration of the motives and arguments whereby we are to oppose them.

III. Another instrument of mortification is a hearty and well-grounded resolution; and indeed without a firm resolution it is in vain for us to attempt the mortifying of our lusts, or any difficult undertaking whatsoever. For there is a wide distance between thoughts and things, and it is much easier to discourse of things than to pass them into execution: for clear reasonings are accompanied with a wonderful delight, because there we engage only

with designs; and fighting only with the ideas of things, they will easily suffer themselves to be conquered by us, and taken captive at our will: but when we pass into practice, that will revolt and oppose us in the execution, which was so very compliant to the thought and meditation; then you will find that you must wrestle stoutly with those difficulties that will make head against you, and that these will put you to a greater proof of your valour and constancy than ever you did imagine; so that unless you are armed with a great strength of resolution, you will be beaten off at the first attempt, and, meeting with greater resistance than you expected, be forced upon a base and cowardly retreat. Now to form a firm resolution requires a great deal of prudence and good conduct; for it is of a great avail in all cases to begin well; and as a foundation well laid doth secure the superstructure, so a resolution well formed will render the execution of what we are to do a great deal more easy and feasible. Before we do resolve therefore on mortifying our lusts, let us be sure to make use of the former instrument of mortification; that is, let us acquaint ourselves with all those mighty arguments against sin wherewith either our reason or religion can furnish us; and let us consider them over and over, till they are familiar to our understandings, and our thoughts have extracted the utmost force of them; for which end it will be necessary for us to seek direction from our spiritual guides. Then let us seriously consider with ourselves, what it is that we are about to do, what vices we must divorce, and what virtues we must espouse; and let us thoroughly inform ourselves beforehand of all the foul ways, and

steep ascents, and dangerous precipices that are in the road of our duty; and then, as you go along in your meditations, ask your own hearts whether there be any passage that they startle at, or whether, notwithstanding all, they are seriously willing you should go on. Remonstrate to your own souls, that in such a place your lust will be tempting you with the genial pleasures of an adulterous bed; and desire them to deal plainly with you, whether they can be deaf to those bewitching invitations: tell them, that before you have gone many paces farther, the wants of poorer men than yourselves will be soliciting your charity; and desire to know of them whether they are willing you should do good, and trust God for a repayment: represent to them how highly you may be provoked at the next step by the injurious carriage of some insolent adversary; and know of them whether they are willing to contain their savage passions within the bars of reason and sobriety: and so go on in your own thoughts through all the paths of your duty, and never cease putting these and such like questions distinctly to your own souls, till they give an express consent to every duty that presses for a resolution. And it will very much conduce to the settling of a fixed judgment in you, if you do not conclude too soon, but weigh all these things over again; if you would ask yourselves the next morning, whether you still continue of the same mind, and whether your former consent was not the effect of a present heat, or whether now, after the cool of the night, you do still allow of it; for in all probability, if you resolve in haste, you will repent at leisure. And this, I doubt not, is the bane of most of our good resolutions, that generally they are the ef-

fects of some transitory passion, and not of a sober judgment and serious deliberation: for when men resolve well in heats of passion, they resolve to do they know not what themselves, but swallow their religion by the lump, without considering the particulars of it; and so they do by their duty as men do with bitter pills, which they can swallow whole, but when they come to chew, those prove so distasteful, that presently they spit them out again. When therefore you have calmly considered with yourselves all the arguments against your sins, and all the difficulties of forsaking them, and you have reasoned your wills into an express consent to part with them for ever, then betake yourselves to your bended knees, and in the most solemn manner devote yourselves unto God: "O Lord, I acknowledge I "have been a great offender against thee; and that "my past life has been nothing else but a continued "rebellion; but now I see my folly, and am ashamed "to think what a notorious offender I have been; "wherefore here I solemnly promise, in thy dreadful "presence, and in the presence of all thy holy angels, "that wherever I have done amiss, I will do so no "more; be witness, O thou righteous Judge of the "world, that here I shake hands with all my darling "lusts, and bid them adieu for ever: wherefore be "gone ye soul-destroying vipers, that have twined so "long about me; away, ye wretched idols, whom I "have too long adored; for in the name of God I "am fully resolved never to entertain you more." And now having reduced ourselves to a good resolution of mind, our greatest difficulty is over; for so long as we keep our resolution we are invincible, and all the powers of hell will not be able to prevail

against us. For our wills are not to be forced by any power whatsoever; and there is no temptation in the world can make us return to our sin, so long as we are heartily resolved against it; so that all we have now to do is to keep the ground we have gotten, and not to suffer our spiritual enemies to batter down those good resolutions we have raised against them, which if we can but maintain will infallibly secure us against all their power and malice.

IV. Another instrument of mortification is a wise and prudent discipline. When by consideration we have brought ourselves to a thorough resolution of amendment, then, to confirm and secure our resolution, there are sundry wise and prudent methods to be used; as first, a frequent repetition and renewal of it. For at first our vicious inclinations will muster up all their strength against our resolution, and a perpetual contest there will be between them, till either the one or the other is subdued: but our good resolution being yet but raw and infirm, will ever and anon be apt to flinch and retreat; so that unless we often renew and reinforce it, it will not long be able to withstand the assaults and importunities of our vicious inclinations. Wherefore, if we mean to be successful in this work of mortification, it will be necessary, for some time at least, till the strength of our bad inclinations is broken, that we should every morning, before we go abroad into the world, renew our vows and resolutions of obedience, and reinforce them with a serious consideration of those great arguments whereupon they were first founded; that we should go out of our chambers armed as men that wait for their enemies, and not trust our own souls among the temptations of the world, till we

have first chained up our inclinations with new vows of fidelity. Let us therefore every day, as soon as we open our eyes, thus resolve with ourselves; "I "am now going into a world of temptations, where "I shall be solicited, both from within and without, "to falsify my vows which I have made to my God, "and to betray my own soul into everlasting perdi-"tion; wherefore I do here, in the dreadful presence "of God, and of my Saviour, and of all the heavenly "host, renew and ratify again the good resolutions "I have made, without any reservation or excep-"tion; and whatsoever invitations I may have to "the contrary, I will never revoke this promise "which I now make, or any part of it: so help me, "O my God." And if for a while we would but use ourselves to this method, I doubt not but we should quickly find our good resolutions so strengthened and confirmed, that the gates of hell would not be able to prevail against them: but if when we have made a resolution against our sins, we do not take care to confirm and renew it, we shall find the strength of it will by degrees so decay and abate, that at last it will be foiled and baffled by every temptation that encounters it. This therefore is one part of that wise and prudent discipline we are to exercise over ourselves, when we are throughly resolved against our sin, frequently to renew our resolution.

2. Another part of it is frequent reflection upon, and examination of ourselves. And indeed if we do not inure ourselves to this, we shall very often sin unawares, without either considering what we are doing, or reflecting upon what we have done; and while we can thus sin without check or control, it will be in vain for us to make resolutions of obe-

dience. For still the pleasure of one act will invite us to another, and so, in the hurry of our worldly occasions, we shall go on to repeat sin after sin, without heeding what we do, or repenting of what we have done: and if we suffer one sin to break through the fence, that will open a gap for others to follow; and if these are not presently stopped by serious reflection, they will make the breach yet wider for others; till at last they have trodden down all the enclosures of our resolution, and laid open our whole souls into a common and thoroughfare of iniquity. But now by inuring ourselves to a frequent reflection upon and examination of our own actions, we shall in a great measure prevent those many surprises which otherwise will be unavoidable to us; and when at any time we stumble at unawares, the penance we shall undergo in reflecting upon our fault will so imbitter the pleasure of it, as to render it incapable of seducing us again. Wherefore, to secure the mortification of our sins, as it is necessary that every morning we should renew our resolution against it, so it is no less requisite that every night (especially till we have made some considerable progress) we should seriously examine our performances, whether they have comported with our resolutions; and if upon an impartial survey of our own actions we find that they have, let us lie down in peace, blessing and adoring that grace by which we have been preserved. But if we are conscious to ourselves of any breach that we have made upon our morning vows of obedience, let us bitterly bewail our own folly and baseness, and reflect upon it with the greatest shame and indignation: "What have I "done, O wretched traitor that I am, both to God

" and my own soul! I have mocked the great Ma-
" jesty of heaven with solemn vows of obedience,
" and broke the most sacred ties to come at those
" lusts which will be my ruin. What can I plead for
" myself, base and unworthy that I am? With what
" face can I go into his dreadful presence, whom I
" so lately invoked to be witness to those vows which
" I have this day falsified? Yet go I will, though I
" am all ashamed and confounded, and confess and
" bewail mine iniquity before him." And if we would but keep ourselves a while to this strict discipline, we cannot imagine how mightily it would contribute to the mortification of our lusts: it would make our reason so vigilant, and our conscience so tender, that in a little while we should be startled with every appearance of evil, and death itself would not be so terrible as sin to us; the pleasure of our sin would be so allayed and abated by those stinging reflections that would follow upon it, that it would be no longer capable of alluring and seducing us; and the dread of that bitter penance which we must undergo at night would sufficiently secure us against the temptations of the day.

Thirdly and lastly, Another part of that prudent discipline which we are to exercise upon ourselves, is to keep ourselves at as great a distance from sin as prudently and conveniently we can. He that will mortify his sin must at first not only abstain from sinning, but also from every thing that doth nearly approach and border upon it: as for instance, it is not sufficient to mortify an intemperate appetite, that we abstain from drunkenness and gluttony; but, besides this, we must, for a while at least, be very abstemious, till we have reduced our appetite from its

wild exorbitances, and not indulge to ourselves the utmost liberties of lawful eating and drinking: it is not sufficient for the subduing our wanton inclinations, that we abstain from adultery and fornication; but we must also forbear those meats and drinks, those gestures and societies, those sights and sports which are apt to administer fuel to our immodest flames: to tame our malicious and revengeful passions, it is not enough that we abstain from all unjust retaliations of injuries; but we must moreover restrain ourselves even from that lawful displeasure and just resentment which may safely be allowed to a meek and charitable disposition. And under these strict restraints we must keep ourselves for a while, till we have worn off our evil inclinations, by habituating ourselves to the contrary virtues; and then we may safely unloose our bands, and return again to our lawful freedoms. But if, while we are strongly inclined to any sin, we will venture as near to it as lawfully we may, it is a mighty hazard but our inclination will carry us a great deal farther than we should go. For generally the transition out of the utmost of what is lawful into the nearmost of what is sinful is undiscernible, the κανὼν or *line* that metes out a virtue from its neighbouring vice being commonly so small, that it is hard to distinguish where they part, or to find out the just boundary whereto we may go, and no farther; so that when we think we are only upon the extremities of what is lawful, we are many times past the line, and are far gone within the borders of what is sinful. So that unless we had an infallible guide to accompany us in all our actions and circumstances, and to point out to us the particular limits of lawful and unlaw-

ful, it is impossible we should be safe within the neighbourhood of evil; but, like those who dwell upon the confines of two hostile countries, we shall still lie open to invasion on every side. For our bad inclinations are never so impatient of restraint as when they are within prospect of satisfaction, and the objects which attract them are near and easy to be enjoyed: now they will struggle with all their might against our resolution, and taking a new scent of those beloved lusts, whose alluring relishes they had almost forgotten, with all the ties of conscience we shall hardly be able to withhold them from following the beloved game. So that unless we keep ourselves at a convenient distance from sin, our bad inclinations will be always within view of temptation; which the nearer it is, the more it will court and importune them; and while we keep near our sin, and do not enjoy it, we do but tantalize ourselves, and enrage our own hunger, by seeing a bait before us which we dare not swallow. If ever therefore we mean to mortify our lusts, we must not only avoid coming at them, but, so far as we can, approaching towards them; at least till we have so weaned our inclination from them, that their nearness ceases to be a temptation to us. These are the parts of that wise and prudent discipline which we are to exercise upon ourselves, as a mean and instrument to mortify our lust.

V. Another instrument of mortification is frequent receiving of the sacrament. And indeed I do not know any one more effectual cause, or more fatal symptom, of the decay of Christian piety among us, than is the common and woful neglect of this solemn ordinance, which were it but frequented with that

wise and due preparation that it ought to be, would doubtless be highly instrumental to reform the world, and to make men good in good earnest. For besides that those sacred elements are by God's institution become moral conveyances of the divine grace, whereby our good resolutions are nourished and confirmed, there we have represented openly to our senses one of the greatest arguments against sin in all our religion, viz. the passion and sacrifice of our blessed Saviour; there he is represented to my eyes in all his wounds and agonies, bruised and broken for my sin, and bleeding to expiate my transgressions. And, "O my obdurate soul, canst thou be-
"hold this tragical spectacle without indignation
"against thy sins, which were the cause of it? Does
"not thy heart rise against thy sins, whilst thou here
"beholdest him weltering in his blood, and hearest
"those gaping wounds it issues from, proclaiming
"them his assassins and murderers? But if thou
"hast not ingenuity enough to prompt thee to re-
"venge thy Saviour's quarrel upon these his mortal
"enemies, yet methinks self-love would move thee
"not to be fond of thy sins, when thou here behold-
"est how much the Son of God endured to expiate
"them. For how canst thou think of sinning with-
"out trembling and astonishment, who hast here be-
"fore thine eye such a dreadful example of God's
"severity against it? Does it not strike thy soul
"into an agony to behold this bloody tragedy,
"wherein the all-merciful Father is represented so
"inexorably incensed against thy sins, that he that
"was the most innocent person that ever was upon
"earth, and also the greatest favourite that ever was
"in heaven, could not with all his prayers and tears

" obtain thy pardon, without undergoing for thee the " bitter agonies of a woful death? Sure if thou hast " any one spark of love in thee, either towards thy " Saviour or thyself, this solemn commemoration of " his passion cannot but affect thee with horror and " indignation against thy sins." But then as in this great solemnity we do commemorate our Saviour's passion, so we do also renew the vows of our obedience to him; which (as I have shewed you) is very instrumental in itself to the subduing of our sins; but much more, when it is done in so sacred a manner. For as feasting upon sacrifices was always used as a federal rite, both among the Jews and heathens, whereby God and men, by eating together, did mutually oblige themselves to one another; so the Lord's supper being a feast upon the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood, when we come thither we eat and drink of his sacrifice, and do thereby devote ourselves in the most solemn manner to his service; we swear allegiance to him upon his own body and blood, and take the sacrament upon it, that we will be his faithful votaries. When we take the consecrated symbols into our hands, we make this solemn dedication of ourselves to God; " Here we offer and present unto " thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be " a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee; " and here we call to witness this sacred blood that " redeemed us, and those vocal wounds that inter- " ceded for us, that from henceforth we oblige our- " selves never to start from thy service, what diffi- " culties soever we may encounter in it, and what " temptations soever we may have to forsake it." Now what can be a greater restraint to us, when we are solicited to any evil, than such a solemn and sa-

cred obligation; methinks the sense of that dreadful vow that is upon us should so overawe us, that we should not be able to think of sinning without horror: "For, Lord! how shall I dare to cheat and de-
" fraud my neighbour, when it was but the other day
" that I vowed to be honest, and took the sacrament
" upon it? With what conscience can I now hate, or
" design revenge against my brother, when I so
" lately swore unto God, upon the body and blood of
" my Saviour, that I would love and forgive all the
" world?" Surely if men had any sense of God, any dram of religion in them, they would not be able, after such engagements, to look upon any temptation to sin without trembling: and whatsoever pretences of unworthiness men may make, to keep themselves from this ordinance, I doubt not but the great reason of their neglect is this, that they love their lusts, and are resolved, whatsoever comes of it, they will not part with them; and so they will not come to the sacrament, because they must be obliged to renounce their lusts there, which they are extremely unwilling to do. And if this be their reason, as I fear it is, they are unworthy indeed, the more shame for them: but it is such an unworthiness as is so far from excusing their neglect, that it is a foul aggravation of it: for he that will not receive the sacrament because he will not renounce his lusts, makes one sin the reason of another, and so pleads that for his excuse which will be the cause of his condemnation. But if we are honestly resolved to part with all our sins, and can but willingly devote them as sacrifices to the altar, we are sufficiently prepared for this great solemnity, and shall be welcome guests to the table of our Lord: if we can sincerely pay our

vows at his altar, we may confidently *take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.* And having thus chained up our lusts by the vows of obedience we have paid there, it will be hard for them to shake off such mighty fetters, or ever to get loose again from so strict a confinement; especially if we take care to repeat this our sacramental vow as often as conveniently we can. For (as I have already shewed you) the frequent renewal of our holy vows and resolutions does mightily tend to strengthen and reinforce them: and therefore it is worth observing, how much care Christ hath taken, in the very constitution of his religion, to oblige us to a constant repetition of our vows and good purposes. For at our first entrance into covenant with him, we are to be baptized; in which solemnity we do renounce the Devil and all his works, and religiously devote ourselves to his service: but because we are apt to forget our vow, and the matter of it is continually to be performed, and more than one world doth depend upon it, therefore he hath thought fit not to trust to our first engagement, but so to methodize our religion, that we should ever and anon be obliged to give him new security. For which end he hath instituted this other sacrament, which is not, like that of baptism, to be received by us once for all, but is to be often repeated; that so at every return of it we might be obliged again to renew our old vows of obedience: and doubtless would we but follow this good design of our Saviour, we should be far more successful in our religion than we are. For till we come to a confirmed state of goodness, our holy fervour will be very apt to cool, our good purposes to slacken and unwind, and our virtuous endeavours

to languish and grow weary: so that unless we revive our religion by frequent restoratives, in a little time it will faint and die away. Wherefore, to keep it alive, it is very necessary that we should come to our great Master's table every time we are invited by the solemn returns of this holy festival; that here we may renew our vows, and re-invigorate our resolutions, and repair our decays, and put our sluggish graces into a new fermentation: and if we would thus frequently communicate with a due preparation of mind, we should doubtless at every sacrament acquire new life and vigour, and our good resolutions would every day get ground of our bad inclinations, till at last they had totally subdued them.

VI. And lastly, Another instrument of mortification is constant prayer. For besides that by our sincere and honest prayers we are sure to obtain strength and assistance from God, to enable us to vanquish and subdue our lusts, he having promised to give his holy Spirit unto every one that asketh it; besides this, I say, by a constant and serious devotion, our hearts will be filled with such an overawing sense of God, that in all our actions we shall dread and revere his authority, and be ready to tremble at every thought of offending him. For there is nothing gives us such a quick sense of God as prayer, that being the most immediate address that we can make to him, and the highest elevation of our souls towards him: for we are a sort of beings that are akin to two worlds, being placed in the middle between heaven and earth, as the common centre wherein these distant regions meet. By our superior faculties we hold communion with the

spiritual world, and by our inferior with the corporeal one: but to this sensible or corporeal world we lie open and bare, all its objects being present to us, and striking immediately on our senses; whereas between us and the spiritual world there is a cloud of sensible things, which interrupts our prospect of the clear heaven above them; so that before we can perceive that which is divine, we must remove this world out of the way, and withdraw our souls from those thoughts and desires wherein these lower things have entangled them, that so we may lie open to the heavenly light, and our cold affections may be immediately exposed to the enlivening warmths of the Sun of righteousness. And hence arises the necessity of holy meditations and devout prayers; the one being necessary to abstract our minds from the objects of corporeal sense, and the other to inspire our wills with divine affections and inclinations: for meditation furnishes our understandings with noble thoughts and heavenly ideas, and prayer carries out our wills to the love of them, and joins our affections fast to them; so that by the one we are tied in our minds, and by the other in our choice of the better world. For prayer does naturally sublimate our gross and earthly passions; and by keeping our minds intent upon God, it wings our affections towards him, and animates them with divine fires: and we do never rise from our knees after a devout address unto God, without deriving a magnetic virtue from him, and being sensibly touched with his charms and attractions. So that if we did but inure ourselves to fervent prayer, those holy affections which we should suck in with our devotions would be instrumental to ex-

tinguish our vicious inclinations; and we should go every day from the throne of grace with such a lively sense of God, and such a vigorous relish of divine things, as would be sufficient to antidote us all the day after against the venom of any sinful contagion. Wherefore, if we are in good earnest, and do seriously intend the mortification of our lusts, let us every day, before we go into the world, be seasoning of our minds with holy devotions; and while we are addressing unto God in the deepest sense of his unbounded perfections, and of our own dependance upon him, let us pour out our souls before him, and make an hearty oblation of our souls and bodies to him. Let us offer up our wills to him broken and contrite, that he may put them into what form and posture he pleases; shew him an heart that quitteth all interest in itself, and that would be only led and conducted by him; tell him that you are sensible, that to mortify your lusts is far more difficult than to resolve to do it; and beseech him to enable you to be valiant in your actions, as through his grace you are already in your minds and hearts, that you may with as much certainty, if not with as much ease, do and effect, as you have projected and resolved. And having thus implored his aid, and sincerely offered up yourselves unto him, you have laid a strong engagement upon him not to abandon you: for to be sure he will not throw away a heart that puts itself thus humbly into his hands, nor suffer the Devil to make a prey of that which hath been so affectionately devoted to him. For it was by the concurrence of his grace with our own faculties, that this resolution of submission to him was begotten in us; and can we

think that the Father of love will ever abandon his own offspring while it cries out to him, and with pitiful and bemoaning looks implores his aid and compassion? Surely this cannot choose but move his fatherly bowels, and make them yearn and turn towards it, and by a strong sympathy draw his compassionate arm to aid and relieve it. Let us therefore but faithfully use our own endeavours, and fervently implore God's grace, and then to be sure he will never suffer that divine fire, which he hath kindled within us, to be overborne by our corruptions, but will kindly cherish it with his own influence, and touch it with an outstretched ray from himself, till it hath burned through all that rubbish that oppresses it, and till it rises into a victorious flame.

CHAP. III.

Of some motives to mortification, taken from the mischiefs of sin.

HAVING shewn you at large what are the proper instruments of mortification, I shall in the next place proceed to press you with some prevailing motives and arguments faithfully to employ and use them. And here I shall not insist upon those arguments which arise from the consideration of the future state, because these will fall in hereafter, when I come to discourse upon it: all the arguments that I shall here urge therefore, to press you to mortify your sins, shall be drawn from the consideration of those present miseries and inconveniencies which they bring you into. And these I shall rank under two general heads:

First, Such as are outward and bodily.

Secondly, Such as are inward and spiritual.

I. The outward and bodily inconveniencies which our sins bring upon us are chiefly these four:

First, They destroy our health, and shorten our lives.

Secondly, They stain our reputation.

Thirdly, They waste our estates.

Fourthly, They disturb even our sensual pleasures and delights.

1. Consider how your sins destroy your health and shorten your lives. And to convince you of this, I need do no more than only to lead you into the slaughterhouses of death, and to shew you how thick they are hung round about with the numerous trophies of lust and intemperance: behold, there lieth an adulterer choked with the stench of his own rottenness; there a drunkard fettered with gouts, and drowned in catarrhs and dropsies; there a glutton stifled with the loads of his own undigested meals; lo, there lie the dismembered martyrs of revenge and insolence, that have lost their limbs upon the field in a foolish quarrel for vanity and mistresses; and there the envoys of rapine and murder, whose infamous carcasses have furnished the scaffolds and the gallows. These and such like woful examples almost every day's experience presents to our view, which one would think were sufficient to warn men of those vices which they so commonly find attended with such tragical effects: and indeed there is no vice whatsoever, but does one way or other undermine our health, and impair the strengths of nature. For all viciousness consists in an excess either of our passions or our appetites; and it is plain and obvious

how destructive to our health the wild excesses of our appetites are: how naturally wantonness doth melt our strength, consume our spirits, and rot our bones; how gluttony obstructs our breath, oppresses our stomachs, and drowns our bodies in unwholesome crudities; how drunkenness inflames our livers, corrupts our blood, dilutes our brains, and converts us into walking hospitals of diseases. And as for the excesses of our passions, it is no less apparent how much they disturb and discompose our natures: thus anger, we see, fires the spirits and inflames the blood, and makes the humours sharp and corroding: thus immoderate sorrow oppresses the heart, dries the bones, shrivels the skin, and overcasts the spirits with clouds of melancholy: thus envy swells the hypochondres, which, by drinking up the nourishment of the neighbouring parts, makes the whole body lean and meagre: and in a word, thus excessive fear stagnates the flowing spirits, and turns the blood into a trembling jelly. And such disorders as these, when they are frequent, must needs gradually undermine the forts of life, and hasten them into an untimely ruin. Now is it not very strange, that those men who are commonly so over-tender of their lives, should be fond of diseases, and court their own executioners? that they should choose to swallow sicknesses, and to drink dead palsies and foaming epilepsies, and to pass through so severe a discipline of torments, only to get an habit of destroying themselves? It is true indeed, some there are that have been so naturalized to their vices, that they cannot live nor be well without them; that are sick while they are temperate, and are not able to sleep, but in a sea of liquor, and are fain to put themselves into

excesses of passion to ferment their blood, and rouse their drowsy spirits: but then it is to be considered that generally they bring themselves to this sad pass by their own evil habits and customs, which they acquire by doing great violence to themselves, and committing forcible outrages on their own natures. There is no unreasonable passion or appetite can be necessary to our health or ease, till we are first habituated to them; and before we can be habituated, we must undergo a tedious course of pain and uneasiness: many a fit of tormenting rage must be endured, many an uneasy draught and sickly qualm and fainting sweat must be undergone, before wrath and intemperance can be made easy and pleasant to us; and much more before they become necessary remedies: and it is rare, if ever, we have need of these excesses, till by a long course of violence upon ourselves we have first overturned our natural temper and constitution. And what man in his wits would ever swallow poison, merely to force his nature into a reconciliation with it; when he is sure beforehand, that if he doth not die in the experiment, (as it is a great chance but he doth,) yet that he must undergo many a sickness and bitter agony, before his nature is so accustomed to it as to be preserved and nourished by it? But, alas! by that time we are arrived to that pitch of intemperance, as to be drunk without the penance of a surfeit or a fever, the heat and vigour of our nature is usually so quenched with crude humours, our spirits so drowned in rheums and dropsies, and our brains so drenched in clouds of unwholesome moisture, that all our life after we are but so many walking statues of earth and phlegm; and having washed away all the principles of reason

and discretion in us, we grow old in folly and sottishness, and at the last die changelings. Thus sin, you see, is a disease to the body; it wastes our strength, and either makes the candle of our life to burn dim, or blazes it out into an untimely period. Why then should we not be as earnest in the cure of this, as we are of our other diseases? For doubtless, would we but as carefully apply the means and instruments of mortification, as we do, when we are sick of a fever or an ague, the proper remedies against them, we should quickly cure those excesses of our passions and appetites, which do so disease our bodies and disturb our natures.

2. Consider how your sins do stain and blemish your reputation. For there is nothing in the whole world more natural to men, than to admire virtue and disesteem vice, wheresoever they find it: this we seem to do by a natural instinct, antecedently to all our reasoning and discourse; and it is no more in our power not to do it, than it is to choose whether our pulse shall beat or our blood circulate. For that virtue is an ornament, and vice a deformity to human nature, is a proposition so self-evident, that at the first proposal it commands the assent of all rational beings; nor is it in any man's power so far to offer violence to his own faculties, as to believe vice praiseworthy, or commendable, any more than it is to believe that to be white and straight, which he sees to be black and crooked: and accordingly you will find, that by all mankind it hath ever been branded with an infamous character, and looked on as a disparagement to the noblest accomplishments. For in all the monuments of former ages, never were any man's lusts and intemperances recorded

among the titles of his honour; nor was there ever any one canonized in the records of fame, for being a villain or a great debauchee. But generally they are the wise or the valiant, the just or the merciful, the chaste or the liberal, whose names have been consecrated in history; and no man ever acquired a glorious memory, but it was either by being virtuous, or by seeming to be so. And though wicked men, like glow-worms, do sometimes shine in the dark, where either their vice is not seen, or is mistaken for virtue; yet usually, at the approach either of time or light, their lustre vanishes, and goes out in stink and dishonour. So that methinks, had we any regard to our own reputation, we should scorn to harbour those infamous lusts, which in the opinion of all the world are so great disparagements to us: for what a monstrous shame is it to be despised by all wise men, to be hooted at by boys, to be talked of in fairs and markets, and pointed at and described by appellatives of scorn! And yet all this we expose ourselves to, for the sake of a few base lusts, which cause us to rot above ground, and to stink alive, and when we are dead, will strew our graves with dishonour, and enroll our names in the black records of infamy.

3. Consider how your vices do waste and consume your estates. For generally it is a very chargeable thing to be wicked, there being few lusts but do require a large revenue to maintain them: for what a vast expense is the epicure at to provide meat and drink-offerings for that idol-god his belly! What an inestimable charge is it to the prodigal ostentatious fool, to gratify all his vanities, and plume the wings of his fantastic pride! How much does it

cost the insatiate wanton, to make provision for his unbounded sensuality! How many a fair estate hath there been spent in litigious suits at law, merely to improve a quarrel, and gratify a silly revenge! And how many a prosperous trader hath undermined himself by his own fraud and knavery; whilst for a present dishonest gain he loses a customer, by whom he might have honestly gotten ten times more in seven years' trade and commerce! And indeed for the generality, there is a world of ill-husbandry in being wicked; most of our lusts being like the holes of a sieve, through which our estate runs out as fast as we can pour it in: and I believe it were easy to demonstrate, that the ruin of most families, and the beggary of most persons, is owing to one vice or other; and that where one is sunk by mere misfortune, there are twenty ruined by their own wickedness. Now what man in his wits would keep such a company of devouring lusts about him, that are perpetually spongeing upon his estate, and eating the bread out of his children's mouths? Who would ever expose himself and his family to the hazard of want and beggary, merely to gratify an unreasonable passion, or to satiate a wild and intemperate appetite? But perhaps you think that there is no great danger of this; for whatever comes of it, you will take care of the main chance, and be such good husbands in your wickedness, as to be sure not to impair your estates by it. Alas, poor men! you know not what you will be; for when once you are set into a course of wickedness, you are like so many eager gamesters, that when they set to it, resolve to lose but a crown, or a piece at most; but when they have lost that, they double their stakes in hope to recover all

again, and so game on, till they have no more to lose. And first perhaps your lusts will be very modest, and content themselves with the cheapest provisions you can make for them; but when once they have inveigled and drawn you in, they will still be craving more costly entertainments, and will by degrees so encroach upon you, that you know not when or where you shall stop: so that it is in vain for you to talk what you will do, for either you must mortify your lusts, or resolve to gratify them; and if you do the latter, there is no end of it; for, like the *daughters of the horseleech*, they will still be crying, *Give, give*, till you have no more to give, and then they will prey upon yourselves.

Fourthly and lastly, Consider how your vices do disturb and interrupt even your sensual pleasures and delights. For how often do you embroil the peace of your families by your own peevish passions, and disturb the whole neighbourhood, with whom you might enjoy the pleasures of a friendly conversation! How many enemies do you create yourselves by your own malice and ill nature, whom you might as easily oblige by kindness and good-will, at least to a fair correspondence, if not to a return of mutual endearments! To how many hazards and difficulties, jealousies and disappointments, impatiencies of desire and fears of discovery, does lasciviousness expose you! Whenas, would you but confine your vagrant lusts within the holy circles of conjugal chastity, you might entertain your appetites with innocence and ease, with equal pleasure and less difficulty, with a pure conscience, and without the hazard either of disappointment or discovery. How do you perplex and entangle yourselves by lying and knavery, consuming the pleasure

of your lives within a winding maze of little tricks and intricate contrivances! And what shameful retreats and false colours and daubings are you fain to use, to avoid contradiction and discovery! Whereas were you but honest and sincere in your professions and actions, your way would be open, and easy, and uniform; where you might pursue all your ends by the directest means, and need never wander about in the labyrinths of a mysterious subtilty; where you may walk without blushing in the sight of the sun and the view of the world, and have no occasion to sculk into coverts and retirements. Once more; what miserable drudges doth covetousness make of us! It will not let us rest day nor night, but sends us about in everlasting errands; now to be scorched in the southern, anon to be frozen in the northern parts of the world; this day it exposes us to be shipwrecked at sea, the next to be terrified on shore; and all this to get a great heap of wealth, which when we have gotten, it will not let us enjoy: so that when we have what we so impatiently hungered after, we have only acquired a greater necessity; because before we needed only what we had not, but now we need what we have too; our covetous desires luring us off, and not enduring we should feed upon our own quarry: and so, after all our toil, we shall need as much at least as we did before; only before we did not possess what we needed, whereas now we shall need what we do possess. But did we take the pains to learn that great lesson of Christian contentment, we should then pursue the world with far less vehemence, and enjoy it with far more freedom: we should be industrious without that eager solicitude, and if it pleased God to bless our industry, we should

neither waste what we have, nor want it; and many a happy year we should enjoy that which now we consume in vexatious care to keep, and restless desire to increase it. How unpleasant is the life of the intemperate epicure, who lives in a continual lethargy, and dozes away his time in sottishness and stupidity; and by perpetually sucking in rheums and defluxions, doth so weaken and dilute the vigour of the organs of sense, that he perceives not the briskness of his own relishes; but after his delicious gobbets are past his throat, they load and oppress him, and his stomach is fain to do penance for the folly and extravagance of his palate; and those deep draughts wherein he seeks to drown his conscience and his melancholy, leave behind them such an uneasiness, both in his body and mind, as nothing can reprieve; for as soon as he hath slept away the fumes of his intemperance, he finds himself sick as well of company as of solitude, and is fain to endure all the sour regrets both of his conscience and his stomach. Whereas would but this man govern his appetite by the laws of temperance; would he eat to satisfy, and not to invite his hunger, and drink to refresh, and not to force and oppress himself; his relish would be quick and vigorous, his gust sincere, and his digestion easy; and his appetite being not overloaded with the foregoing meal, would quickly return again, and give a pleasing relish to his next morsel. When he rose from his table, his nature would not be burdened, but refreshed and recreated; his eyes would not swim in floods of rheum, nor his brains in seas of liquor; his face would not be fired with the unwholesome inflammations of his liver, nor his reason overcast with the clouds and vapours of his gorged sto-

mach; but after his frugal meals, he would still find his organs fresh and vigorous; and when he went to bed, his sleep would not be broken with so many unquiet starts nor sickly qualms; nor in the morning would he awake in a fever; but all his life would be serene and calm, and he would enjoy all that is pleasant in luxury, and be only barred from the apparent sting of it. Many other instances I might add, but these, I think, are sufficient to demonstrate, that vice is the great disturber even of those sensual pleasures and delights that it promises to us: so that it plainly contradicts its own pretensions, and though it invites to pleasure, yet entertains us with nothing but distraction and uneasiness. The cup of fornication which it holds out to us, though it is spiced at the top, is gall and wormwood at the bottom; and all those delights that it courts us with are only so many painted miseries; which, though they may look amiable and inviting at a distance, yet upon a more considerate view will be found to be most wretched cheats and impostures. So that methinks were we but ingenious epicures, that understood the pleasures of the body, and the true methods of enjoying them, we should for their sakes discard those lusts that are so contrary and destructive to them; and it would be as impossible for us not to hate our sins, as not to love our pleasures.

And thus you see how many mischiefs and inconveniencies our lusts bring upon us, in respect of our bodies and outward circumstances; so that if we had no immortal spirit to take care of, no interest beyond the grave to look after, yet methinks had we but reason enough to understand, and self-love enough to pursue our present welfare, that were sufficient to

oblige us to mortify our lusts. For so long as they live they will be plagues to us, and we must never expect a quiet possession of our own happiness, till we have utterly destroyed these mutinous disturbers of it, that are as so many thorns in our eyes and goads in our sides. But, alas! it is not our bodily happiness only that they interrupt and invade; but (which is more intolerable) they poison our souls with their contagious breath, and scatter plagues and infection over our noblest faculties. Which brings me to the second sort of motives to persuade you to mortify your sin, viz. those that are drawn from the present mischiefs and inconveniencies that it brings upon our souls; which are chiefly these three:

First, It spoils our understandings.

Secondly, It subverts the natural subordination of our faculties.

Thirdly, It disturbs the tranquillity of our minds.

1. Consider how much your sins do spoil and waste your understandings. For sin is an affront to our understandings, and a plain contradiction to the reason of our minds; there being no vice whatsoever but what is founded in folly and unreasonableness. Whilst therefore we live in sin, we do so far lay aside our reason, (which ought to be the moderator of our actions,) and abandon ourselves to the conduct of our own blind appetites and headstrong passions; which will naturally weaken our rational faculties, and bring a lingering consumption on our understandings. For as our powers are improved and perfected by exercise, so they are impaired and wasted by disuse and inactivity; and therefore our reason being such a power as is not naturally to be perfected but by action, it necessarily follows, that the less

active it is, the more imperfect it must be. Whilst therefore we live in sin, or (which is all one) in the neglect of our reason, we consume and waste our rational faculties; which being unemployed will naturally contract rust, and grow every day more weak and restive. For a life of sin is all transacted by sense and passion; reason sits looking on, and having no part in the brutish scene melts away in sloth and idleness: its vital powers freeze for want of motion, and, like standing waters, stagnate and gather mire, till they corrupt and putrefy. And besides this decay that sin brings upon our understanding, by taking us off from the exercise of it, it is also injurious to those bodily organs, by which our understanding, while we are in the flesh, doth reason and operate. For our body is as it were the musical instrument, upon which our mind sets all its harmony, and by which it runs all the curious divisions of discourse: and the blood and spirits and brain, and other parts of it, are the strings of this instrument, upon the well tuning of which depends all the music of reason. But now there is scarce any sin, that doth not some way or other indispose our bodies for the use of our minds, and render them unfit, especially for the most perfect exercise of our reason. Thus drunkenness dilutes the brain, which is the mint of the understanding, and drowns those images which are stamped upon it in a deluge of unwholesome moistures. Thus gluttony clogs the animal spirits, which are, as it were, the wings of the mind, and renders them incapable of performing the noblest and sublimest flights of reason. Thus anger and wantonness force up the boiling blood into the brain, and by that disorders the motions of the spirits there,

confounds the phantasms, and disturbs the conceptions, and shuffles the ideas of the imagination into an heap of inarticulate and disorderly fancies. And how is it possible our minds should strike true harmony, when its instrument is thus disordered, and all the strings of it are so out of tune? how should we understand well, while our brains are overcast with the thick fumes of sensual lusts; and those spirits, which should wing our minds, are grown so listless and unactive, that they rather hamper and entangle them? For what clearness is to the eye, that purity is to the mind: as clearness doth dispose the eye to a quick and distinct perception of material objects, so purity from lust and passion disposes the mind to a more clear apprehension of intellectual ones; and the more any man's soul is cleansed from the filth and dregs of sensuality, the brighter it will be in its conceptions, and the more nimble and expedite in its operations. For purity doth naturally fit the body to the mind; it puts its organs all in tune, and renders its spirits fine and agile, and fit for the noblest exercises of reason: which they can never be whilst they are subject to disorderly passions, and drenched in the unwholesome reeks of sensuality and voluptuousness. But besides this mischief which sin doth to our understandings, by rendering our bodies unapt to all intellectual purposes; it also dyes the mind with false colours, and fills it with prejudice and undue apprehensions of things. For while our souls are under the sway of any disorderly passion or appetite, they will naturally warp our judgments into a compliance with their own interest; and bribe us to judge of things, not according to what they are, but according to what we

would have them: and when our judgments are thus bribed by our interest, and swayed by our passions, it is impossible we should judge truly of things. For our passions will discolour the objects of our understandings, and disguise them into such shapes as are most agreeable to our humour and interest; and so our opinions of things will alter upon every variation of our humours, and our thoughts, like weather-cocks, will be wheeling about upon every change of wind. So that while we are encompassed with the mists of sinful prejudice, they will necessarily hinder the prospect of our reason, and obscure the brightness of our understandings, and the clearness of our discerning faculties. And thus you see how natural it is to vice to spoil and waste our understandings, and to choke up those fountains of light within us with clouds and darkness. And that it doth so is very apparent in fact; for how much wicked men have lost their reason, is apparent by the ridiculous principles upon which they generally act; which generally are so very weak and absurd, that it would be impossible for men to assent to them, were not their understandings perished, and the reason of their minds wofully impaired and wasted. As for instance; the desperate atheist wishes that there were no God, upon this principle, that it is better for men to be without a God, than to be without their lusts; than which there can be nothing more wild or extravagant: for it is plain that without our lusts we can be happier than with them; whereas it is the common interest of mankind, that the world should be governed by infinite goodness conducted by infinite power and wisdom; and no man or society of men can be happy without it. For take God out

of the world, and you take away all hope from the miserable, all comfort from the sorrowful, and all support from the dejected and calamitous; and at one blow cut in sunder all the bands of society, rase the foundations of virtue, and confound all distinction between good and evil. And yet the besotted wretch, for the sake of a paltry lust that betrays him with a kiss and stings him in the enjoyment, would fain banish God out of the world; though it is apparent that in so doing he would do mankind more mischief, than if he should blow out all the lights of heaven, or pull down the sun from the firmament. And in the general, what more ridiculous principles can there be thought, than such as these: That sense is to be preferred before reason, earth before heaven, moments before eternity; that the shortlived pleasures of sin, which expire in the fruition, are sufficient to balance the loss of an immortal heaven, and the sense of an eternal hell; that it is time enough to repent when we can sin no more; and that God is so fond a being, as that rather than ruin those that wilfully spurn at his authority and trample upon his laws, he will accept a few tears and promises to live well, when we can live no longer, in exchange for all the duty we owe him; and that we may sit all the day in the lap of our lusts, and enjoy them without control, and then at night, when we can enjoy them no longer, fly up to heaven upon the wings of a *Lord have mercy upon us.* And yet a wicked life is either built upon no principles at all, or upon such as these, which are ridiculous beyond all the extravagant conceits of fools or madmen. It is no wonder, therefore, that the scripture so frequently brands the sinner with the infamous charac-

ter of a *fool;* for if you measure him by the principles he acts upon, there is not a greater fool in nature; which is a plain evidence, how much vice doth besot the understandings of men, and, like those barbarous Philistines, puts out their eyes, only to sport itself with their follies and extravagancies. So that methinks had we any reverence for our own reason, by which we are constituted men, and distinguished from the beasts that perish, we should never endure those lusts within our bosoms, that do so much impair and waste it.

2. Sin subverts the natural subordination of our faculties. For the natural order and polity of our natures consists in the dominion of our rational faculties over our sensitive passions and appetites; so that then only we live according to the law of our nature, when we eat and drink, and love and hate, and fear and hope, and desire and delight, according as right reason prescribes. For the noblest principle of human nature is reason, by which it is that we are constituted men, and advanced into a form of beings above all sublunary creatures; and this reason of ours is implanted in us by the great Author of our beings, for no other end, but only to steer and direct us; to be an eye to our blind and brutish affections, to correct the errors of our imaginations, and bound the extravagancies of our passions and appetites, and to regulate the whole course of our actions; so as that we may demean ourselves as becomes such beings as we are, and placed in such relations and circumstances. God therefore having compounded us of contrary natures, viz. rational and sensual, which are pregnant with contrary inclinations and affections; from hence arises the ne-

cessity of all those heroic virtues, which consist in the dominion of our reason over our sensitive affections and appetites; such as chastity and sobriety, meekness and equanimity, and the like; all which are proper to us as beings made up of contrary principles, from whence spring those contrary inclinations, in the good or bad government whereof consists the nature of virtue and vice. Whilst therefore we keep our brutal passions and appetites in subjection to our reason, we follow the genuine current of human nature; in which our best and noblest principle rules, and all our inferior powers are regularly subordinate to it: but when we degenerate into a state of sin, we thereby discompose the harmony of our natures, and put all our well-ranked faculties into a strange disorder and confusion. For every sin is a rebellion either of our passions or appetites against our reason; and we never commit any known evil but we wilfully affront our own understandings, and offer open violence to those superior faculties that should rule and govern us. So that when by a custom of sinning, our passions and appetites have been trained up for a while in disobedience to our reason, they will by degrees grow so headstrong and ungovernable, that it will be a hard matter to restrain them within any compass of reason and sobriety; and unless we take a world of pains to suppress them, they will never leave rioting and tumultuating within us, till they have broke through all their natural confinements into a licentious, wild, and boundless anarchy; and having thus got head within us, and beaten our reason from its native throne, they will hurry us headlong into all manner of follies and extravagancies.

For now we shall act no longer from reason, but from sense; our nature being turned upside down, and the cardinal points of our motion changed into quite contrary positions; so that our reason will stand us in no other stead, but only to cater for our flesh and sensitive affections, and to make us brutes with greater luxury and relish: and being thus wholly acted by our brutish sense, and led only by the blind instincts of the flesh, our reason will have no hand in the government of our lives; but, like the beasts of the field, we shall live at random, and do things, not because they are reasonable in themselves, but because they are pleasing to our unreasonable affections and appetites. Such a strange disorder doth sin bring upon our natures; so miserably doth it blend and confound our faculties, that were it not for our speech and shape, it would scarce leave us any remaining character of distinction from the beasts that perish. For it dissolves our reason into a mere sensual sagacity, and enslaves that high-born power to every base passion and appetite; and so reduces our well-formed natures into an undistinguished chaos, where sense and reason, brute and man are shuffled together in an heap of rude and undigested ruins. So that methinks, had we any reverence for that excellent nature that we carry about with us, that nature by which we are allied to angels, and do border upon God himself, we should never endure to harbour those inhuman lusts, that do so disorder and confound it, that make such spoils and devastations within us, that do so disturb the harmony of our faculties, and disjoint the very frame of our beings.

3. Sin disturbs the tranquillity of our minds; and

this naturally follows from the former: for the mind of man can never be at ease so long as its bones are out of joint, and all its faculties so wofully disordered. For thus every thing is at ease, so long as it is in its own natural state and condition: but when once its parts are displaced, or put into a disorder, or distorted into an unnatural figure, it is in restless motion till it returns again to the specific state and posture of its own nature. And so it is with the mind of man; which, while it preserves its own natural station, and superiority over our affections and appetites, is calm, and quiet, and serene, and enjoys within itself perpetual ease and tranquillity: but being thrown out of its native throne, and led into captivity by its own vassals, it can find no rest in this preternatural state; but, like a disjointed member, is in perpetual anguish and anxiety; and having, like all other things, an inward strong propension to its own natural state and condition, it will be perpetually struggling and contending towards it, till it hath quite wearied and tired out itself with its own vain and ineffectual efforts; and then it will sit down and bemoan itself, and pine away with grief and dissatisfaction. And hence it is that in the course of a wicked life we feel such contentions between the flesh and the spirit, such perpetual broils between the law in our minds and the law in our members; which proceeds from this natural struggling and *conatus* of the mind to recover its native empire over our affections and appetites: from which it will never wholly surcease, till it is wholly subdued to the will of the flesh; and when it is so, it will be perpetually torn and distracted by those various, wild, and inconsistent affections, whereunto it will be subjected. For

so long as our passions are subject to our reason, there can be no division among them; because nothing can divide our passions, but only our proposing to ourselves different and contrary ends: but the ends of reason are all consistent with and subordinate to one another, its lesser and inferior ends being only the inns at which it baits upon the road towards its superior ones; and whilst we are under the power and conduct of one sovereign end, our passions must necessarily join hand in hand, and walk together like brethren in unity. But when once they have shaken off the yoke of reason, and submitted themselves to the dominion of sense; among that great variety of ends and objects which sense proposes to them, they must needs be torn and divided one from another. For such is the scantiness of sensual goods, that we not being able to content ourselves with any one of them, are fain to walk the rounds in a constant succession and circle of varieties; and then every one of these various goods will create within us a various desire: and so as sense doth multiply its temptations, we shall still multiply our desires and affections; and at every new game that springs, we shall still let fly new passions. But now the ends of vice are not only various, but also contrary to and inconsistent with one another: for all vices consisting in extremes, either in excesses or defects, their ends must be contrary too, and so they cannot but disagree; excess and defect being in themselves most contrary. And these contrary vices must needs raise contrary factions in the mind, and people it with a rabble of wild and inconsistent passions; which will be always bandying one against another, and consequently embroiling the

soul in eternal mutinies and tumults. And this is the state of every vicious man; he is divided into infinite schisms and separations; and, like a barbarous country, cantoned out into a world of petty principalities, which are always together by the ears, and continually invading one another's dominions. Now what a miserable distraction must a man's mind be in, when it is thus justled to and fro in such a crowd of contrary and impetuous passions; when pride shoves it one way, and covetousness another; when ambition thrusts it forward, and cowardice pulls it back again; and so many different lusts do at the same time hurry it so many different and contrary ways! How is it possible it should escape Actæon's fate, to be worried till it is torn in pieces by its own hounds? And therefore as we value the peace of our own minds, and would not have the inward harmony discomposed by the perpetual jarrings of so many contrary passions, it concerns us to subdue and mortify our lusts; for so long as we entertain these seditious incendiaries, they will be perpetually raising tumults within us, and our minds will never be at quiet for them. For the only way to keep our minds at peace is to unite our affections; which we can never hope to do, till we have subdued them to the empire of our reason. But when we come to be under the command of that one supreme end which our reason will propose to us, as the utmost scope of our desires, then, and not till then, will these scattered rivulets of our affections unite themselves in one and the same channel, and flow towards one and the same ocean: and then our mind will be at rest, and its contrary passions being laid, which now like the boisterous waves dash one against another, it

will no longer be capable of being ruffled into a storm, but, in the midst of all the changes of this world, will find itself perpetually inspired with the most calm and gentle thoughts.

CHAP. IV.

Of helps to mortification given us by the Spirit of God.

THE motives and arguments for mortification, which arise from considering the mischiefs and inconveniencies of sin, having been spoken to, I shall now proceed to such helps to this duty as are given us by the Spirit of God; and I shall consider them under these four heads:

First, The external arguments and motives of the gospel.

Secondly, The external providences of the divine Spirit, by which he excites us to our duty.

Thirdly, The aids and assistances which the holy angels give us, who are the agents and ministers of the Holy Ghost.

Fourthly, The internal motions and operations of the Holy Ghost upon our souls.

I. Let us consider the external arguments and motives of the gospel; such as the promises and threats of it, the great example of our Saviour described in it, together with all those mighty considerations out of his passion and resurrection, his intercession for us at the right hand of God, and his coming to judge the world in the last day: all which are the aids and assistances of the Holy Spirit, who hath revealed them to us, and demonstrated their truth and divinity by sundry miraculous operations;

which are therefore called the evidences and demonstrations of the Spirit. So that whatsoever there is in the gospel to enable us to our duty; whatsoever counter-charms its promises afford us against the charms and allurements of our own lusts; whatsoever antidotes its threatenings prescribe us against the terrors of the Devil's temptations; whatsoever motives there are in the life or death, resurrection and intercession of our blessed Saviour, and in his final judgment, by which we must stand or fall for ever: in a word, whatsoever arguments the laws or the creed of our holy religion offer us, either to incite us to our duty, or to enable us to baffle the temptations of vice, they are all from the Spirit, and consequently are to be reckoned among those gracious aids and assistances which he affords us. And hence the gospel, which teaches us to *deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly*, is called the *grace of God which bringeth salvation unto all men;* Tit. ii. 11, 12. And in Rom. viii. 2. the apostle calls it *the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*, by which he was *made free from the law of sin and death.* Nay sometimes the gospel is called *the Spirit*, 2 Cor. iii. 6. *Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit*, i. e. not of the law, but of the gospel; *for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life:* that is, as he elsewhere explains himself, the law is a ministration of death, but the gospel brings life and immortality to light: and that this is the meaning is plain from what follows, ver. 7, 8. *But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious*, (which is a plain description of the law of Moses,) *how shall not the mi-*

nistration of the spirit be rather glorious? And consonantly hereunto by *the spirit* we may understand the motives and arguments of the gospel.

II. Let us consider the external providences of the divine Spirit, by which he excites us to our duty, and doth many ways administer to our reformation; which are so considerable a part of God's grace and assistance, that there are very few good thoughts and purposes that spring up in our minds, which have not their rise from some external event of divine Providence. And this we may easily observe, by following the train of our own thoughts, and pursuing the stream of them to their spring and original: for though many times we find good thoughts injected into us we know not how nor whence, yet, if we do but curiously observe the rise of our soberest thoughts and purposes, we shall generally find that it is some external accident or other that occasions them. Either our sin betrays us into some great shame or infelicity, or our wicked designs are baffled by some intervening accident, or some remarkable judgment meets us, as the angel did Balaam, in the road of our folly and wickedness, by which our stupid consciences are many times startled into reflections; or by some good providence we are directed to a serious book or faithful guide, or linked into some pious family or virtuous association, by whose wise admonitions, holy examples, or friendly reproofs, we are frequently inspired with good thoughts and serious resolutions; and from these or such like providences ordinarily spring the beginnings of our reformation. So that it is no mean assistance that the divine Providence contributes to us; but by a thousand arts of love and

methods of kindness, which we take no notice of, it administers to our recovery, and serves the everlasting interests of our souls. Sometimes it removes temptations from us, and keeps them at a distance, while our lust is hot, and ready to take fire, till it is cooled and extinguished by sober counsels: sometimes by indiscernible accidents it suggests good thoughts to us, and raises good desires in us, and then seconds those accidents with such a train of events as it knows will be most conducive to continue those thoughts, and to nurse up those desires into fixed and lasting resolutions: in a word, it observes the *mollia fandi tempora*, and is infinitely watchful in the timing its addresses, so as to strike while the iron is hot, and to interpose when we are most apt to be persuaded and wrought upon. If therefore by these assistances of the divine Providence we do mortify our lusts, we do it by the Spirit; who doth so order and dispose all those outward events and accidents as may be most conducive to our amendment.

III. Let us consider those aids and assistances which the holy angels give us, who are the agents and ministers of the Holy Ghost, whom he sends forth to succour and assist us in the discharge of our duty. And hence, Heb. i. 14. they are said to be *ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation:* and in pursuance of this their ministry they are said to pitch their tents round about those that fear God, Psal. xxxiv. 7. and God himself hath promised to *give his angels charge over them, to keep them in all their ways*, in Psalm xci.11. Which expressions, I confess, do immediately refer unto the outward and temporal

protection which good men do receive from the holy angels: but since those blessed and benign spirits are so much concerned in human affairs, we cannot but suppose that, so far as their own ability and the laws of the invisible world will permit them, they are ready to succour our souls as well as bodies, and to contribute to our eternal as well as temporal interests; especially considering that of our Saviour, Luke xv. 10. that *there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.* And if they are so far concerned in our repentance as to rejoice in it, to be sure they will and do promote it; since in so doing they contribute to their own joy. Now the holy angels, being the ministers of the divine Providence, have great advantages of assisting us in our duties, and serving the interests of our souls; which advantages to be sure their own goodness and benignity will prompt them to make the utmost improvement of. They have many opportunities to present good objects to us, and to remove temptations from us; of disciplining our natures by prosperities and afflictions; and of ordering and varying our outward circumstances, so as to render our duty more facile and easy to us. And besides, as they are spirits, they have a very near and familiar access to our souls: not that they can make any immediate impressions upon our understandings or wills, which is a sphere of light to which no created spirit can approach, but is under the immediate economy of the Father of spirits; but yet being spirits, I conceive they may easily insinuate themselves into our fancies, and mingle with the spirits and humours of our bodies, and by that means suggest good thoughts to us, and raise holy affections

in us. For that they can work upon our fancies is apparent; else there could be neither diabolical nor angelical dreams: and if they can so act upon our fancies as to excite new images and representations in them, they may by this means communicate new thoughts to the understanding; which naturally prints off from the fancy all those ideas and images which it sets and composes. And as they can work upon our fancies, so they can also upon our spirits and humours; else they have not the power of curing or inflicting a disease: and by thus working upon our spirits, they can in some measure moderate the violence of our passions; which are nothing but the flowings and reflowings of the spirits to and fro from the heart: and by working upon our humours they can compose us to such a sedate and serious temper, as is most apt to receive religious impressions, and to be influenced by the motions of the Holy Ghost. These things I doubt not but the blessed angels can do, and many times do, though we perceive it not: and though possibly, by the laws of the world of spirits, they may be restrained from doing their utmost for us, that so we may still act with an uncontrolled freedom, and be left under a necessity of constant and diligent endeavour, yet doubtless their assistance is not wanting to us; but as the evil angels are always ready to pervert and seduce us, so the good are no less ready to reform and recover us. And since whatsoever they do for us, they do as the agents and ministers of the divine Spirit; whatsoever we do by their assistance, we do by the Holy Spirit.

IV. And lastly, Let us consider the internal motions and operations of the Holy Ghost upon our

souls. For besides all those assistances which the Holy Spirit vouchsafes to us by his word, and his providence, and his holy angels, he does also very powerfully aid and help us by his own immediate motions and suggestions. For that the ministrations of religion have been always accompanied with the internal operations of the Spirit, is evident from that miraculous success that religion hath found in the world: for I cannot imagine how Christianity, that never was beholding to human force and power, but, instead of that, found all the powers of the world armed against it, and had so many mighty prejudices to combat, before ever it could be admitted to speak with men's reason; I say, I cannot imagine how, under such circumstances, it could have thrived and flourished as it did, had it not been accompanied with an invisible power from above. For how did it triumph in its very infancy over all the power and malice of the world, growing like the palm-tree by depression, and conquering in the midst of flames! What wonderful alterations did it make in the lives and manners of men! transforming in an instant the debauched and dissolute into patterns of the strictest temperance and sobriety, and with its mighty charms turning wolves into lambs, and vultures into turtle-doves! Which wondrous effects were so very frequent, that the heathens themselves took special notice of them; which, as St. Austin tells us, made them to attribute its success to the power of magic; thinking it impossible that it should do such wonders without the assistance of some powerful spirit. And indeed it is not to be supposed how it could work such strange and sudden alterations in men, by its external arguments and

motives, without a divine power concurring with them, and animating and enforcing them: and though now that Christianity hath gotten such footing in the world, and is become the religion of nations, the divine Spirit does not ordinarily work upon men in such a strange and miraculous way, but proceeds in more human methods, by joining in with our understandings, and leading us forward by the rules of reason and sobriety; so that whatsoever aids it affords us, they work in the same way and after the same manner as if all were performed by the strength of our own reason; yet we have a standing promise, which extends to all ages of Christianity, that to him who improves the grace which he hath already, more grace shall be given; that if we *work out our salvation with fear and trembling*, God will *work in us to will and to do;* and that he will give his holy Spirit to every one that sincerely asks and seeks it. For of the performance of this promise, there are none of us all but have had many sensible experiences: for how often do we find good thoughts injected into our minds we know not how nor whence! How frequently are we seized with strong and vehement convictions of the folly and danger of our own wicked courses, even in the midst of our loose mirth and jollity, when we are rocked into a deep security, when we have endeavoured to chase good thoughts from our minds, or to drown them in sensuality and voluptuousness! How often have we been haunted with their importunities, till we have been scared by them into sober resolutions! and when we have complied with them, what joys and refreshments have we sometimes found in the discharge of our duty, to encourage us to perse-

verance in well-doing! All which are plain and sensible instances of the internal operations of the Holy Spirit upon our souls. So that when we comply with these inward motions of the Holy Ghost, so as to forsake those sins which they dissuade us from, we do then *mortify the deeds of the body by the Spirit.*

From the consideration of these benefits by the Spirit of God, many useful inferences may be deduced: and first, from hence we may discern the necessity of the Spirit, to enable us to mortify the deeds of the body. And indeed, considering the infirmity of our natures, and the many temptations we have to encounter, how we are habituated to a sensual life before we are capable of exercising our reason, and how much our wills are biassed by our carnal inclinations; it is hardly to be imagined, how we should ever be able to retrieve ourselves from the power and dominion of our own lusts, without some supernatural aid and assistance. For though we have an understanding capable of distinguishing between good and evil, and of discerning all those advantages and mischiefs that are inseparable unto virtuous and vicious actions; though we have a will that can comply with the dictates of right reason, and is no ways determined and necessitated to evil; and though we can do whatsoever we will: yet if, besides those motives which arise out of the nature of virtue and vice, we had not supernatural arguments to assist us, our inclinations would certainly prove too strong for our reason. If the lascivious wanton had no other arguments to oppose against the temptations of lust, but that it vexes him with impatience, fills him with mad and ungovernable de-

sires, torments him with fear and jealousy, betrays him into sickness and poverty, and the like; how can it be expected that such slender arguments should prevail against the importunities of his depraved appetite! If the covetous oppressor had no other motive to confront his lust with, but that his injustice exposes him to the hatred of those whom he injures, and violates the laws of society, and consequently is destructive of the public good, in which his own is involved; alas! what thin arguments would these be to him in comparison with the temptations of a bag of gold! And though to these natural arguments God hath added sundry supernatural ones in the revelations of the gospel, such as are in themselves sufficient to check our most outrageous appetites, and to baffle the strongest temptations; yet, alas! our thoughts are so squandered among this great multiplicity of carnal objects that surround us, that did not the divine Spirit frequently suggest those supernatural arguments to us, and by the powerful influence of his grace keep our minds intent upon them, we should never recollect ourselves to such a thorough consideration of them, as is necessary to persuade ourselves by them into a lasting resolution of amendment. So that we have very great need both of the outward and inward grace of God: for though we can deliberate what is best to choose, and choose what we find best upon deliberation, yet we are like men standing in *bivio*, between two contrary roads, and are naturally indeed free to turn either to the right hand or to the left; but on the left-hand way there are so many temptations perpetually beckoning to us, and inviting us unto that which is evil, and our brutish passions and appetites

are so ready upon all occasions to yield and comply with them, that we should certainly go that way, did not the Holy Spirit importune us with strong arguments to turn to the right-hand way of virtue and goodness.

2. We may learn from hence the necessity of our concurrence with the Spirit. For the Spirit of God works upon us in such a way as is most congruous to our free and rational natures; that is, it doth not act upon us by mere force, or irresistible power, but addresses to our reason, with arguments and persuasions, and so moves upon our wills by the mediation of our understandings: but when he hath done all, he leaves it to our own choice whether we will reject or embrace his proposals. For although I firmly believe, as no man would be wicked, were he not invited by the temptations of sin, so no man would be good, were he not solicited by the grace of God; yet I see no reason to imagine, that either the one or the other invades the liberty of our wills. The temptations of sin indeed incline us one way, and the grace of God another: but when all is done, they leave us free to choose or refuse, and neither the one nor the other forces or necessitates us. And hence the successes of the divine grace are in scripture attributed to the disposition or indisposition of the subject it acts upon: so Matt. xi. 20, 21. *Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein his mighty works were done; Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.* From whence I argue, that that grace which would have converted Tyre and Sidon was

not irresistible; for if it had, it would have converted Chorazin and Bethsaida too: for how could they have resisted irresistible grace? And why should it not have had the same effect on the one which it would have had on the other, had there not been something in the one which was not in the other, which did actually resist and vanquish it? And so likewise in the parable of the seed sown in the highway, the stony, thorny, and good ground, Matt. xiii. the reason why the seed prospered in some, and not in others, is plainly resolved into the different condition of the soil: for as for those that either considered not at all, or not enough, the seed of the divine grace proved altogether ineffectual to them; but as for those who had so throughly considered its proposals, as to form in their minds a firm and settled judgment of them, it produced in them a most fruitful spring of virtues and good works. Which is a plain argument that the successes of God's grace depend upon the concurrence of our endeavours with it; for had it wrought irresistibly upon these different soils, it must have had the same success in all. And indeed it is infinitely unreasonable to expect that God should make us good irresistibly, without the free concurrence of our own will and endeavours; since by so doing he must offer violence to the frame of our beings, and alter the established course of our natures; which consists in a free determination of ourselves, according to the dictates of our own reason. For that which is irresistible must necessitate the subject upon which it acts; and therefore, if we are impelled to be good by a power which we cannot resist, it is not in our power to choose whether we will be good or no. Wherefore, though

God be infinitely desirous of our happiness, and ready to contribute whatsoever is necessary to promote it, yet he will not effect it by necessary means and causes, but in such a way only as is fairly consistent with the liberty of our wills; that is, he will not save us without ourselves, whether we will or no; but take our free consent and endeavour along with him. And having done all that is necessary to persuade us, he expects that we should consider what he saith, and upon that, consent to his gracious proposals, and express this consent in a constant course of holy and virtuous endeavours: and if we will not do this, we cannot be saved, unless God work a miracle for us, and alters the course of nature; which is the great law by which his providence doth govern all the beings in the world. And this we have no reason to expect, either from the goodness of God's nature, or from any revelation he hath made to us. Not from the goodness of his nature; for why is it not as consistent with that to govern us as free agents, as to make us such? Not from any revelation of his will; for that indispensably exacts our free concurrence with his grace and assistance, and requires us to make ourselves a *new heart, to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling*. It is true God is also said to *work in us to will and to do, to create in us a new heart*, and to *create us in Jesus Christ unto good works:* which seemingly repugnant expressions can be no otherwise reconciled, but by supposing God and man to be joint causes contributing to the same effect; so that where God speaks as if he did all, we must suppose the concurrence of our endeavours; and where

he speaks as if we were to do all, we must suppose the concurrence of his own grace.

3. We may be assured from hence of the certainty of success, upon such a concurrence of our endeavours with the Spirit of God; which plainly implies the assistances of the Spirit to be within our power, as being in an inseparable conjunction with our sincere and faithful endeavours. And that they are so is apparent: for as for the outward assistances of the Spirit, which are the powerful arguments and motives of the gospel, we have them always at hand, and may make use of them when we please we have a free access to this divine armoury, and may at any time furnish ourselves with sufficient weapons to assoil the most formidable temptations: and as for the inward aids of the blessed Spirit, God by his own free promise hath inseparably entailed them upon our honest and pious endeavours. Thus he hath promised to give his grace to those who humble themselves, and to draw nigh unto them who submit themselves to him, James iv. 6, 7, 8. and *unto every one that hath*, that is, improves what he hath, he hath promised *it shall be given, and that he shall have abundance*, Matt. xxv. 29. and to every one that asks sincerely and honestly, he hath promised *to give his holy Spirit*, Luke xi. 13. And thus by his own free promise he hath tied his Spirit to our endeavours, so that we may have his assistance when we please; he being confined by his own promise to be ready at our call, and to come in to the aid of our endeavours, whensoever we shall need and ask his assistance. And having such a powerful second engaged in our quarrel, what reason have we to doubt of success and victory? For what lust is

there so strong, that we may not subdue? what habit so inveterate, that we may not conquer? what temptation so powerful that we may not repulse, whose endeavours are thus seconded with almighty aids from above? For now whatsoever the divine Spirit can do in us, we can do; because we can do that which, being done, will infallibly oblige him to concur with us; and though we cannot conquer our lusts in our own single strength, yet we can by our endeavours engage him on our side, who is both able and willing to enable us to conquer them. So that if we will, we may be invincible; and there is no temptation can be too strong for us, if we do not by our own sloth and cowardice disengage the almighty Spirit from assisting us.

4. From hence we may perceive how much reason there is for our continual prayers and supplications to God; since it is so apparent that our victory over sin, and consequently our eternal welfare, doth so much depend upon the aids and assistances of the Spirit of God; and since God is so ready to give his holy Spirit to us, whensoever we sincerely ask and desire it. Now the great reason of prayer is want, and the greatest encouragement to it is assurance of supply; but there is nothing in the world that we have more need of, and (if we faithfully seek it) nothing that we can have more assurance of, than the gracious influence of the Holy Ghost. We have as much need of it as of our daily bread; because our souls will starve and famish without it: and we have as much assurance of it as the sacred word of the God of truth can give us; because he hath promised it to us, who can as soon cease to be, as not to be faithful: and therefore if, after so much need and

encouragement, we do neglect our prayers, and turn our backs upon the throne of grace; it is a plain argument, that either we are wretchedly insensible of our need of God's grace, or causelessly suspicious of the truth of his promise. And doubtless he that can pass day after day without putting up one prayer to heaven, that can venture himself among the infinite snares and temptations of this world without imploring the divine aid and protection, is a very bold and foolhardy sinner; one that declares he regards neither God nor his own soul, and that he cares not what becomes of him either here or hereafter. Methinks did we but soberly consider how much we want God's grace, and how ready he is to afford it us, we should as soon venture to rush naked into a battle among squadrons of swords and spears, as to go at any time into the world without God, to hazard our immortal souls in the midst of such a numberless battle of temptations, without arming ourselves by prayer with the divine grace and assistance. Wherefore since we have so much need, and (if we seek it) so much assurance too of the Spirit of God, let us take that excellent counsel of the author to the Hebrews, Heb. iv. 16. Go *boldly* and importunately *to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in the time of need.*

5. From hence we may perceive the indispensable necessity of our faithful and sincere endeavours, in order to the mortifying our lusts. It is a strange principle which some men have taken up, that if their names are recorded in the eternal roll of election, they shall in time be made good by an irresistible grace; and that if they are not, they shall

never be good at all, though they should endeavour it with their utmost power and diligence: and so they think their best way is to lie still in the harbour, and expect the event; concluding it in vain to begin their voyage towards heaven, without an irresistible gale from thence. A doctrine which I doubt too many men have improved to their own everlasting ruin; though it hath no foundation at all in reason, and hath nothing to support itself, but a few mistaken phrases of scripture. But he that shall impartially consult the whole current of God's word will find that the ordinary language and sense of it is this, that God *desires not the death of a sinner, but would have all men to be saved;* but because he would save us in such a way as is congruous to free agents, and not by fatal and necessary means, therefore he indispensably exacts the concurrence of our endeavours; that we should *run the race that is set before us,* and *strive to enter into the strait gate,* and that *by patient continuance in well-doing we should seek for honour and glory and immortality.* And from any thing that God hath said to us, we have as much reason to hope to be nourished without eating, as to be saved without endeavour. It is true, God hath promised by his grace to cooperate with us, to join in with our faculties, and bless our virtuous essays; but he is by no means obliged to work for us, while we sit idle; to mortify our lusts, while we feed and pamper them; or to purify our minds, while we go on to pollute them with all the filthiness of the flesh and spirit. No; if we would that God should assist us, we must do what we can for ourselves: we can attend upon the ordinary means and ministries of salvation, we can ponder and con-

sider the great motives of our religion, and abstain at least from the outward acts of sin, and implore the divine aid to prosper and succeed our endeavours. And if we will do but this, and what else is in our power, let us then blame God, if we are not successful; and if we die in our sins, let us charge his decrees with our ruin. But if we will disregard the public ministries of religion, and wilfully excommunicate all good thoughts from our minds; if we will comply with every temptation to sin, and refuse to crave assistance from Heaven against it, we have none to blame for our ruin but ourselves. For God hath told us beforehand that he will not save us without ourselves; and therefore he that is to go a long journey, hath as much reason to sit down in hope to be snatched up into the air by a whirlwind, and so to be carried on the wings of it to his appointed stage, as we have to neglect our endeavours for heaven, in expectation to be haled and snatched up thither by the almighty pulleys of an irresistible grace. Let us not therefore, upon this vain presumption, sit still any longer with our hands in our bosoms, lest we perish in our sloth, and expose our own souls to everlasting ruin, by an idle expectation of being irresistibly saved.

VI. From hence we may discern the possibility of keeping the commands of God, in that God by his Spirit doth so powerfully aid and assist us. For supposing we cannot keep the divine law by our own single strength and power, yet it is apparent that we can do that which will oblige the divine Spirit to assist and enable us to keep it; that is, we can do our endeavour, which being done, entitles us to the promise of divine grace and assistance. And

though we cannot do all ourselves, yet since we can do so much as will certainly oblige God to empower us to do the rest, it is already in our power to do all, if we will. He that is strong enough to carry a burden of an hundred weight, but is required to carry two, may carry both; supposing that by bearing as much as he can, he shall certainly be enabled to carry the whole. Now God hath promised us, by the assistances of his grace, whatsoever is wanting in the power of our nature; and therefore, if we fall short of our duty, and consequently of the rewards of it, we can reasonably blame no one but ourselves. For though we cannot do all in our own strength, yet that we do not do all is as much our fault as if we could; since we may do all through Christ, who would strengthen us, would we but do what we can. Let us therefore no longer cry out of the impossibility of God's commands, nor charge our disobedience to them upon the unavoidable weakness of our own natures; since it is so plain, that our sin is resolvable into no other principle but our own wretched wilfulness and obstinacy. But let us betake ourselves to a serious and hearty endeavour of doing our Master's will; and if when we have done all that we can, we should then fall short of our duty, and miss the reward of it, we may then with good reason call him an austere Master, for imposing tyrannical and impossible commands, and expecting to reap where he hath not sown.

Seventhly and lastly, We may perceive from hence the inexcusableness of sinners, if they go on in their wickedness. For God, you see, doth vouchsafe to us such plentiful measures of his grace and assistance, that in the strength of it we may mortify our

lusts if we will, and work out our own eternal salvation: but if we will be negligent, and rather choose to perish in our sin, than take the pains to subdue it by the grace of God, our folly is inexcusable; and no one can be charged with our ruin but ourselves. For what could God have done more for us, than he hath already done? He hath solicited us to forsake our sin with the most important arguments and motives, tempted our hopes with a heaven of immortal joys, and alarmed our fears with the horrors of an endless and intolerable damnation; so that we cannot go on in our sin without leaping over heaven into hell, and wading through an infinite ocean of happiness into the lake of fire and brimstone. He hath plainly told us what the event and issue of our folly will be, and warned us beforehand, that if we will be wicked, we must be miserable; so that if after this we do go on in our sin, we run ourselves upon a foreseen damnation, and leap into hell with our eyes open. He hath promised, that if we will seriously attempt our own recovery, his grace shall be sufficient for us to back our endeavours, and crown them with success; so that if after this we do persist in our folly, we choose destruction, and rush headlong into a ruin which we might easily avoid. In a word, he hath again and again suggested good thoughts to our minds, and by an importunate iteration of them hath frequently courted us to repent, and live: so that if still we persevere in our impenitence, we stop our ears to the addresses of Heaven, and do in effect tell God, that we will not hearken to him, though our souls are at stake, and it is no less than an everlasting ruin that he dissuades us from. And what remedy or excuse is there for such

intolerable obstinacy? So that it is a plain case, God hath done so much for us, that there is not any thing wanting to our everlasting salvation but only our own wills; and if we will not comply with his grace and assistance, he will not save us whether we will or no. So that when inquisition shall be made for the blood of our souls, the utmost we can charge God with is this, that he did not tie up our hands to keep us from murdering ourselves with the cords of an irresistible fate, and by his invincible power drag us to heaven, whether we would or no. But if we have so little regard of ourselves, as to spurn at our own happiness, it is not fit that God should force it upon us; and it would be a mean and unreasonable condescension in him to prostitute the rewards of virtue to those that wilfully refuse them. Wherefore, if we perish in our sin, after God hath done so much for us, he may fairly wash his hands in innocency over us, and charge our blood upon our own heads: and how deplorable soever our condition proves in the future state, God's justice will triumph for ever in our ruin; and our own consciences, in consort with all the rational world, will pronounce him to be most just and righteous in all his ways.

CHAP. V.

Of the eternal reward of mortification and holiness.

THE apostle having declared for our encouragement, Rom. viii. 13. that *if we mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live*, I shall now insist upon these two propositions:

First, That there is a state of everlasting life and happiness prepared for good men.

Secondly, That this their everlasting happiness depends upon their mortifying their lusts.

I. That there is a state of everlasting life and happiness prepared for good men: the truth of which I shall endeavour to prove by some plain and easy arguments.

1. Because the law of our natures hath not a sufficient sanction without it. That there is in us such a law of nature, by which things and actions are distinguished into good and evil, is every whit as evident, as that we have within us a principle of reason. For no man using his reason can ever think it indifferent in itself, whether we obey our parents or contemn them; whether we lie, or speak truth; whether we be grateful or disingenuous to our benefactors: for between these things there is such an essential difference, that they can never be equal competitors to a rational approbation. And accordingly among all mankind we may observe, that there are some vices which have as much the universal judgment of reason against them, as any false conclusion in the mathematics; and some virtues, whose goodness has been as universally acknowledged, as the truth of any principle in philosophy. Wherefore since God hath created us with such a faculty as doth necessarily make such a judgment of good and evil, this judgment must be God's, as well as the faculties which made it: and that which is God's judgment in us must necessarily be a law to us. God therefore having put such a law into our natures, we cannot but suppose that he hath taken care to enforce the observation of it, by rewarding

and punishing us, according as we obey or violate it: for without the sanctions of rewards and punishments to induce men to observe them, laws are insignificant; and that lawgiver doth but petition his subjects to obey, that doth not promise such rewards, nor denounce such penalties, as are sufficient to oblige them to it. And no reward can be sufficient to oblige us to obey, that doth not abundantly compensate any loss or evil we may sustain by our obedience; no punishment sufficient to deter us from disobeying, that doth not far surmount all that benefit or pleasure we can hope to reap from our disobedience. Since therefore God hath implanted a law in our natures, we must either suppose that he hath not sufficiently secured it by rewards and punishments; which is to blaspheme his wisdom and conduct: or else we must acknowledge that he hath established it with such rewards and punishments, as do make it far more advisable to obey, than to transgress it; which that he hath done in all instances can never be proved, without granting the rewards and punishments of another world. For if there be no such thing as future rewards and punishments, it is a folly for any man to concern himself about any thing but his present interest; and in reason we ought to judge things to be good or evil, only as they promote or obstruct our temporal happiness and welfare. Now though it is certain, that in the general there is a natural good accruing to us from all virtuous actions, as on the contrary a natural evil from all vicious ones; and it is ordinarily more conducive for our temporal interests to obey than to disobey the great law of our natures: yet there are a world of instances, wherein vice may be more advan-

tageous to us than virtue, abstracting from the rewards and punishments of another world. It is ordinarily better for me to be an honest man than a knave; it is more for my reputation, yea, and usually for my profit too; and it is more for the public good, in which my own is involved: but yet *pro hic et nunc* it may be better for me, with respect only to this world, to be a knave than an honest man. For whensoever I can but cheat so secretly and securely, as not to fall under the public lash, nor to impair my reputation; and I can but gain more by the cheat, than I shall lose in the damage of the public; it will be doubtless more advantageous for me, as to my worldly interest, to cheat than to be honest. And how often such fair opportunities of cozenage do occur, no man can be insensible, that hath but the least insight into the affairs of the world. So that if God had not reserved rewards and punishments for us in another world, we should not have sufficient motives universally to observe that great law of righteousness which he hath given us: for whensoever we could cheat or steal securely, it would be highly reasonable for us to do it; because thereby we might promote our own temporal happiness, which would be the only end we should have to pursue. And the same may be said of all other laws of nature, which, without the great motives of a future happiness and misery, could no longer induce any reasonable man to obey them, than it is for his temporal interest to do so. For suppose I can secretly stab or poison a man whom I hate or dread, or from whose death I may reap any considerable advantage, what should restrain me from such a barbarous fact? If you say, the law of nature; pray what reward doth

the law of nature propose sufficient to compensate the dissatisfaction of my revenge, or the danger I run in suffering my enemy to live? or what punishment doth the law of nature denounce, that is sufficient to balance the advantage of a thousand or ten thousand pounds a year, that may accrue to me by his death? If you say, the law of nature proposes to me the reward of a quiet and satisfied mind, if I forbear; and denounces the punishment of a guilty and amazed conscience, if I commit the murder: I easily answer, that this peace or horror, which is consequent to the forbearance or commission of murder, arises from the hope and dread of future rewards and punishments; which being taken away, to murder or not murder will be indifferent, as to any peace or horror that will follow upon it: and this being removed, what consideration will there be left sufficient to restrain me from the bloody fact, when I have an opportunity to act it securely, and am furiously spurred on to it by my own revenge and covetousness? So that, if there be no rewards and punishments in another life, to enforce the commands of the law of nature, it is apparent, that no such rewards or punishments are annexed to it in this life as are universally sufficient to oblige men to observe it. And is it likely, that the all-wise Governor of the world would ever impose a law under an insufficient sanction? that he would ever give out his commands to his creatures, and then leave it indifferent to them whether they will obey him, or no? as he must needs have done, if in all circumstances it be not far better for us to obey him than to disobey him. And if our nature is so framed, as not to be effectually persuaded to obedience, without the motives of everlasting rewards and punishments, it is

at least highly credible that there are such: because it would be unworthy of God so to frame the nature of one of his noblest creatures, as to render it incapable of being governed by him without falsehood and deceit.

2. That there is a future happiness reserved for good men in the other world is highly probable from those desires and expectations of it which do so generally and naturally arise in pure and virtuous minds. We rarely, if ever, read of any virtuous man, of whatsoever nation or religion, or sect of philosophers, whose mind hath not been winged with earnest hopes and desires of future happiness; and I know none that have ever denied or despaired of it, but only such as have first debauched and vitiated the principles of their own nature. Such were the Sadducees and Epicureans, sects that had drowned all that was human in them in sensuality and voluptuousness, and are branded upon record for their shameful indulgence to their own brutish genius: and such are no standards of human nature, but ought rather to be looked upon as monsters of men; and therefore, as we do not think it natural to men to be born with six fingers upon one hand, though there have been many such monstrous and unnatural births; so neither ought we to judge either of what is natural or unnatural to men, by those human brutes who by their perpetual wallowing in the pleasures of the body have monstrously disfigured their own natures, and dissolved all that reason, by which they are constituted men, into a mere sensual sagacity of catering for the appetites of the flesh. If we would know therefore what is human and natural to us, we must take our measures from those who are least

depraved, and are most conformable to the laws of a rational nature; who have preserved the natural subordination of their faculties, and reduced their passions and appetites under the empire of their reason: and these are the men whom we call virtuous, and who, because they live in the exercise of those noble virtues which are proper to us men, are to be looked upon as the standards of human nature: by whom alone we can judge of what is natural and unnatural to us. Now virtue and the desires and hopes of immortality are so near allied, that, like Hippocrates's twins, they live and die together. For though while men live a brutish and sensual life, their future hopes are usually drowned in their present enjoyments; yet when once they recover out of this unnatural state, and begin to live virtuously, like reasonable beings, immediately they feel great desires and expectations of a future happiness springing up in their minds, and arising higher and higher, proportionably as their progress is in virtue and true goodness. Which is a plain evidence that these hopes and desires are natural to us, and that they are interwoven by the great Creator in the frame and constitution of our souls. Now how can it consist with the goodness of God to implant such desires and hopes in our natures, and then to withhold from them the only object that can suit and satisfy them! as if it were a recreation to him to sit above in the heavens, and behold the *work of his hands* spending itself in weary strugglings towards him, and gasping all the while it continues in being after an happiness it shall never enjoy! As for other beings, we see they have no natural desire in vain, the good God having so ordered things, that there are objects in nature ap-

portioned to all their natural appetites: but if there be no state of happiness reserved for good men in the other world, we are by a natural principle most strongly inclined to that which we can never attain to. As if God had purposely framed us with such inclinations, that we might be perpetually tormented between those two passions desire and despair, an earnest propension after a future happiness, and an utter incapacity of ever enjoying it: as if nature itself, whereby all other beings are disposed to their perfection, did serve only in mankind to make them miserable; and, which is more considerable, as if virtue, which is the perfection of nature, did only contribute to our infelicity, by raising in us desires and expectations, which without a future happiness must be for ever baffled and disappointed. For if there be no future happiness, either we may know it, or we may not; if we may not know it, why should we think that which reflects so much dishonour upon God, viz. that he hath created in us desires and expectations, only to mock and tantalize them? But if we may know it, then do these desires and expectations seem to be created in us on purpose to torment us. For, for what other end can we desire to be eternally happy, who are only brought forth into the light to be ere long extinguished, and shut up in everlasting darkness? The consideration of which must needs be an exceeding torture and affliction to us.

3. That there is a future happiness reserved for good men is evident from the justice and equity of the divine providence. That God is a most just and righteous governor is acknowledged by all that believe there is a God, and that he rules and governs

the world: and if it be so, then his justice must first or last discover itself in distributing rewards and punishments to men, according as they obey or violate the laws of his government. For what justice can he express in governing the world, if he rules at random; if he never makes any difference between the good and the bad, but rewards and punishes his subjects promiscuously, without any distinction between the loyal and rebellious? And yet in the ordinary course of divine providence in this world, we see little or no distinction made between them; but, as the Wise Man hath observed, Eccles. ix. 2. *all things come alike to all:* so that we cannot know God's love or hatred by any thing that is before us; nay, many times we see the wicked, as the Psalmist describes them, flourishing *like a green bay tree,* Psalm xxxvii. 35. whilst the righteous are sorely oppressed and crushed under the triumphal chariots of their barbarous enemies. So that were there no other state of things but what we see before us, it would be impossible for us to give any tolerable account of the just retributions of the divine providence. For if when we have all acted our parts upon this stage of time, we were to lie down together, and sleep for ever in the dust, how many millions of good men are there that have thought nothing too dear for God, and have not only sacrificed their lust, but their lives and fortunes to his service, who would have no other recompense for so doing, but a miserable life and a woful death, and an obscure and dishonourable grave! And on the contrary, how many millions of millions of wicked men are there, whose whole lives have been nothing but one continued act of

rebellion against God, who have blasphemed his honour, and affronted his authority, and openly contemned all the laws of his government; and yet would undergo no other punishment for so doing, but only to live prosperously, to die quietly, and then to be gloriously enshrined in monuments of marble! And can we think this, and at the same time believe that there is a righteous providence which superintends the affairs of the world? Certainly, if not to govern this material world, and to put things into such a regular course as may be suitable to their natures, and the operations for which they are designed, would argue some defect of wisdom in God; then doubtless, not to compensate virtue and vice, and adjust things suitably to their qualifications; but thus crossly to couple prosperity with vice, and misery with virtue, would argue him deficient both in wisdom, and goodness, and justice. And perhaps it would be no less expedient, with Epicurus, to deny all providence, than to ascribe to it such defects; it being less unworthy of the divine nature to neglect the universe altogether, than to administer human affairs with so much injustice and irregularity. So that either we must deny providence, or (which is worse) deny the justice of it; or believe that there is a future state, wherein all things shall be adjusted, and good men crowned with the rewards of their obedience, and the wicked undergo the punishment of their own follies. For this we are sure of, that the Judge of all the world will do righteously; and that first or last he will distribute his rewards and punishments according to the merit and demerit of his subjects: and therefore, because we see he doth

not ordinarily do it in this world, we have great reason to conclude that he will do it effectually in the world to come.

Fourthly and lastly, That there is a state of future happiness prepared for good men is evident from the revelation of his will, which God hath made to us by Jesus Christ. And this, I confess, is the most concluding argument of all. As for the former arguments, they render the case so highly probable, that this at least must be acknowledged, that we have far more reason to believe and expect a future happiness, than we have to doubt or despair of it: but as for this last, it puts all out of question, and leaves us no pretence of reason why we should doubt or suspect it. For eternal happiness and salvation is the great blessing which our Saviour hath promised us, to encourage us to perseverance in well-doing; and in that everlasting gospel which he preached to the world, he hath in the name of God proposed to us a heaven of endless joys and felicities, and *brought life and immortality to light.* So that if he were commissioned from God to make this great proposal to mankind, we have as much security of a future happiness as we can have of the truth of God; which is the foundation of all the certainty we have, whether in philosophy or divinity. Now that he was commissioned from God to promise what he did to us is apparent, because God himself by sundry voices from heaven declared him to be his ambassador to the world; and proclaimed him *his beloved Son in whom he was well pleased,* and whom he had substituted the supreme minister of his grace and goodness to mankind; and what he declared in words, he also demonstrated in deeds. For when Christ was bap-

tized, God sent down his holy Spirit upon him in a bright shining flame, which, spreading itself round his head, encircled his brows like a crown of sunbeams, and remained upon him: which glorious appearance, answering to that visible glory by which God appeared from between the cherubims, declared him to be the temple of God, in whom *the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily*, and in which he meant to take his residence for ever. And accordingly after this visible shechinah or glory disappeared, we find most palpable and apparent signs of the presence of God in him: for by this it was that he cured the sick, and calmed the seas, and raised the dead, and wrought all those wondrous works by which he proved his mission from above. For so we are told, that he *went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil; for God was with him*, Acts x. 38. And after all the miracles that he did in his life, by this power and presence of God that was in him, being barbarously murdered, he rose from the dead by the same power, and ascended triumphantly to heaven. Of the truth of all which we have as clear and credible testimony as ever was given to any matters of fact; the report of them being handed down to us from those who were eye and ear witnesses; who in the defence of what they testified exposed themselves to infinite hazards, and at last confirmed their testimony with their dearest blood; which is the greatest security that any witness can possibly give of his honesty. For what should move them to testify these things, had they not known them to be true? It was apparently their temporal interest to have concealed them; and their religion, in which their eternal interest was involved,

prohibited them all wilful lying, under the penalty of an endless damnation: and would any men in their wits have maintained a known imposture, when they were assured beforehand, that all they should gain by it was to die for it here, and to be damned for it hereafter? And if their testimony be true, as we have all manner of reason to believe it is, then what they testify doth plainly denote the blessed Jesus to be *the holy one of God;* from whom, as from his most holy habitation, God would hereafter communicate all his blessings to mankind. And if so, then we are sure of eternal life, upon condition of our *patient continuance in well-doing:* for whatsoever he hath promised us, he must have promised us from God; who dwelt in the sacred temple of his body, and from thence pronounced the oracles of his grace and goodness, and manifested himself perpetually by sundry miraculous effects.

From the consideration of our future happiness many useful inferences may be raised: and first, from hence we may perceive what an unreasonable thing it is for us Christians immoderately to dote upon the world. I confess, if our chief or only interest were involved in this world, and we had no hopes beyond the grave, there were then some excuse to be made for immoderate solicitude about the trifling concerns of this present life; but when it is so apparent that we are born to higher hopes, and are here but candidates and probationers for an everlasting preferment in the highest heaven, methinks the sense of it should make us blush at our own follies, to think how busy we are in pursuing the fading vanities of this world, whilst the great interest of our eternity is wholly neglected and forgotten.

Blessed God! who would imagine, that in a world peopled with immortal spirits, that must live for ever in unconceivable happiness or misery, the greatest number of us should be such utter strangers to the thoughts and concerns of another world! that we, who are so industrious in our temporal affairs, as not to slip any opportunity of gain, but are so ready to court every occasion that tends to advance these our momentary pleasures, profits, and honours, should be regardless of those celestial joys, which if we fall short of, we are undone for ever; and which if we arrive to, we shall be as happy as all the beatitudes of an immortal heaven can make us! O inconsiderate beings that we are! where is the reason that constitutes us men, that we should choose thus crossly to the nature of things, when there is so vast a disproportion between the objects of our choice, between heaven and earth, between moments and eternity, between the hungry and withering joys of this world, and the eternally ravishing pleasures of the world to come! Methinks if we had any dram of reason left in us, the consideration that we are born to an immortal crown, which nothing but our own folly can disseize us of, were enough to inspire us with a noble disdain of all these bewitching vanities about us; and to make us look upon them as things beneath us, toys and trifles, not worthy our scrambling for. When we consider, that there is an heaven of endless joys prepared for us, which, if we will, we may make as sure of as we can of our own beings, methinks so vast an hope should raise our grovelling thoughts so high above this world, that when we look down upon it, it should disappear, or look like a thin blue landscape, next to nothing; and all the hurries

and scramblings of silly mortals for little parcels of earth should seem as trifling and inconsiderable to us, as the toils and labours of a little world of ants about a molehill. For how is it possible almost, that such little impertinencies should take up our thoughts, who have an eternity of weal and woe before us! And when we have all that an everlasting heaven means, to busy our thoughts and employ our cares about, how can we engage with so much zeal and vigour in the petty affairs of this world! Foolish and unwise that we are, thus to neglect our most important interests for every impertinent trifle, to sell our souls for a little money, and give immortal hallelujahs for a song! And when we are born to such infinite hopes, to choose Nebuchadnezzar's fate, and leave crowns and sceptres, to live among the savage herds of the wilderness.

2. From hence we may learn, how vigorous and industrious we ought to be in discharging the duties of our religion. For how can we think any pains too much, when an everlasting heaven is the reward of our labour! What a poor thing is it, that we should grudge to spend a few moments here in the severest exercises of holiness and virtue, when within this little, little while, in consideration of our short pains, we shall have nothing else to do throughout a long and blessed eternity, but to enjoy a heaven of pure pleasures, and bathe our faculties for ever in fresh delights; to converse with the fountain of all love and goodness, and warble eternally praises to him; and in the vision of his beauty and goodness to live in everlasting raptures of joy and love! O my soul! what though thou toilest and labourest now to climb the everlasting hills! yet be of good heart, for it will

not be long before thou art at the top, where thou wilt find such pleasant gales and glorious prospects as will make thee infinite amends for all: yea, though the toil thou undergoest were abundantly more than it is; though, instead of the labour of mortifying thy lusts, and living soberly, righteously, and godly, thy task were to row in the galleys or dig in the mines for a thousand years together; yet methinks the consideration that heaven will be at last thy reward should be enough to sweeten and endear it. O would we but often represent to our minds the glorious things of another world, what holy fervours would such charming thoughts kindle within us! and with how much spirit and vigour would they carry us through the weary stages of our duty! What lust is there so dear to us, that we should not willingly sacrifice to the hopes of immortality! What duty so difficult, that we should not cheerfully undergo, while the crown of glory is in our eye! Surely did we but look more frequently to the recompense of reward, we should be all life, and spirit, and wing; our sluggish souls would be inspired with an angelical vigour and activity; and we should run with alacrity, as well as patience, *the race that is set before us.* But, alas! we look upon our reward as a thing a great way off: and it is, I confess, reserved for us within that invisible world whereinto our dull sense is not able to penetrate; which is the reason that we are not so vigorously affected with it. Wherefore, to make amends for this disadvantage, let us often revive the considerations of eternity upon our minds, and inculcate the reality and certainty of our future weal or woe, together with the great weight and importance of them: let us thus reason with

ourselves; "O my soul! if it be so certain as it is, "that there are such unspeakable joys reserved for "good men, and such intolerable miseries for the "wicked; why should not these things be to me as "if they were already present? Why should I not "be as much afraid to sin, as if the gates of hell "stood open before me, and I saw the astonishing "miseries of those damned ghosts that are weltering "in the flames of it? And why should I not as "cheerfully comply with my duty, as if I had now a "full prospect of the regions of happiness, and I saw "the great Jesus at the right hand of God with dia-"dems of glory in his hand, to crown those pure and "blessed spirits, who have been his faithful servants "to the death?" And doubtless would we but inure our minds a little to such thoughts as these, they would wonderfully actuate all the powers of our souls, and be continually inspiring us with new vigour in the ways of holiness and virtue: for what difficulties are there that can daunt our good resolutions, while they are animated with this persuasion, that if we *have our fruit unto holiness, our end shall be everlasting life?* Rom. vi. 22.

3. From hence we may perceive how upright and sincere we ought to be in all our professions and actions: for if there be such an happiness reserved for us in heaven, then doubtless, if we intend to partake of it, we must be sincerely good; because he that is the donor of this glorious reward is a God that *searcheth the heart and trieth the reins*, and is a curious observer of our secret thoughts and most retired actions; and consequently will reward us, not according to what we seem to be, but to what we really are. We may possibly cheat men into a

fair opinion of us, by disguising ourselves in a form of godliness, and facing our conversation with specious pretences of piety; but that God with whom we have to do sees through all the daubings and fucuses of hypocrisy, and can easily discern a rotten core through the most beautiful rind that can be distended over it. So that we can never hope to obtain his blessing, as Jacob did his blind father's, by a counterfeit voice, or exterior disguise of religion: for all the fair vizards of hypocrisy are so far from hiding our blemishes from God, that they lay them more open to his all-seeing eye, and make them appear more monstrous and deformed. Wherefore, unless we are really good, we were better not to seem to be so; for mere pretences of piety will be so far from procuring salvation for us, that they will but enhance and aggravate our condemnation, and sink and plunge us deeper into hell, instead of obtaining any entrance for us into the kingdom of heaven. Since therefore there is such an immortal reward prepared for us in the world to come, if we love ourselves, or have any regard for our most important interest, we cannot but be in good earnest for heaven; and if we are so, we shall be sincere and upright in all our actions, and the great design of our lives will be to approve ourselves to God and our own consciences. If by giving alms we hope to increase our stock in that great bank of bliss above, we shall not care so much to blow a trumpet when we do it, that so the world may take notice of, and praise our bounty; but our rejoicing will be this, that we have approved ourselves to God, from whom we expect the reward of our obedience. If we abstain from sin with respect to the future re-

compense, we shall do it in private, as well as in the view of the world; knowing that wherever we are, we are under God's eye, who alone can make us happy or miserable for ever. In a word, if we seriously mind the glory that is set before us, we shall be as curious of our thoughts and secret purposes as if they were to be exposed upon an open theatre; considering that they are all *open and naked* to that God *with whom we have to do*, and upon whom the hope of our immortal happiness depends. For to what purpose should we dissemble and play the hypocrites, unless we could impose upon the Almighty, and make him believe that we are good when we are not, and so steal to heaven in a vizard?

Fourthly and lastly, From hence it is visible, what great reason we have to be cheerful under the afflictions and miseries of this world, considering what glories and felicities there are prepared for us in the world to come: indeed all the miseries of this world are more or less, as we have more or less reason to be supported under them; but when we consider that our time here is but a moment, compared with our everlasting abode in the world to come, our present happiness and misery will appear to be very inconsiderable. We are now upon our journey towards our heavenly country, and it is no great matter how rough the way is, provided that heaven be our journey's end: for though here we want many of those accommodations which we may expect and desire, yet this is but the common fate of travellers, and we must be contented to take things as we find them, and not look to have every thing just to our mind. But all these difficulties and in-

conveniencies will shortly be over, and after a few days will be quite forgotten, and be to us as if they never had been: and when we are safely landed in our own country, we shall look back from the shore with pleasure and delight upon those boisterous seas which we have escaped, and for ever bless the storms and winds that drove us thither. Wherefore hold, O my faith and patience, a little longer, and your work will soon be at an end, and all my sighs and groans within a few moments will expire into everlasting songs and hallelujahs: Νῦν μὲν αἱ ἡμέραι ἡμῶν πονηραὶ, ἄλλαί δέ τινες εἰσιν ἀγαθαὶ, ἃς νὺξ οὐ διακόπτει. ἔσται γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς αὐτῶν φῶς αἰώνιον, καταλάμπων αὐτὰς τῷ φωτὶ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ δόξης. "Now our days are dark and gloomy, "but the bright glorious day is dawning, which "night shall never interrupt; for God himself is the "eternal sun, that enlightens us with the bright "rays of his own glory." And what is a little cloudy weather compared with an everlasting sunshine? Doubtless these *light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.* Let us therefore comfort ourselves with these things, and while we are groaning under the miseries of this life, let us encourage ourselves with this consideration; that within a little, little while all our tears shall be wiped from our eyes, and there shall be an everlasting period put to all our sorrows and miseries; when we shall be removed from all the troubles and temptations of a wicked and ill-natured world, be past all storms, and secured from all further danger of shipwreck, and be safely landed in the regions of bliss and immortality. And can we complain of the foulness of a way that leads into a

paradise of endless delights, and not cheerfully undergo these short though bitter throes, which, like the Virgin-mother's, will quickly end in songs and everlasting *magnificats?* Cheer up therefore, O my crest-fallen soul, for thy bitter passion will soon be at an end; and though now thou art sailing in a tempestuous sea, yet a few leagues off lies that blessed port, where thou shalt be crowned as soon as thou art landed: and then the remembrance of the storms thou hast passed will contribute to the triumphs of thy coronation; and all the bad entertainments thou meetest with in this life will but make earth more loathsome to thee while thou art here, and heaven more welcome when thou comest there; and these thy *light afflictions, which are but for a moment, will work for thee a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,* 2 Cor. iv. 17.

CHAP. VI.

Of the necessity of mortification, to the obtaining of eternal life.

I COME now to the second thing proposed, namely, that the eternal life and happiness of good men depends upon their mortifying the deeds of the body: and that it doth so, I shall endeavour to prove,

First, From God's ordination and appointment.

Secondly, From the nature of the thing.

I. From God's ordination and appointment. God, who is the supreme Governor of the world, hath proposed eternal life as an encouragement to those *who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality:* and supposing

that wicked men could enjoy the happiness of the other world, yet it would be inconsistent with the wisdom of his government to admit them to it. For should he reward offenders with eternal happiness, who would be afraid of offending him? And if once he rules with such a slack and indulgent rein, as to take away all reason of fear from his subjects, his government must immediately dissolve into anarchy and confusion. And therefore to prevent this, he hath fairly warned us by his reiterated threats, that if we live in disobedience to his laws, we shall be for ever banished from that kingdom of happiness which he hath prepared for those that love and fear him: so in Rom. viii. 13. we are assured, that *if we live after the flesh, we shall die:* and in Gal. v. 19, 20, 21. we are told, that *the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God:* and so 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. *Know ye not* (says the apostle) *that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.* And to the same purpose the same apostle tells us, that *no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of God,* Ephes. v. 5.

All which dreadful denunciations must be supposed to be conditional; for else they are not consistent with the promise of pardon to those that truly repent: so that the meaning of them is plainly this; that if we persevere in these lusts of the flesh, and do not mortify them, we shall have no part nor portion in the kingdom of God. Hence the apostle exhorts us, Coloss. iii. 5, 6. *Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.* Which implies, that if they did mortify these lusts, the wrath of God should not come upon them; but if they did not, they should be liable to the divine indignation among the children of disobedience. By all which it is apparent, that according to God's free ordination and appointment, our eternal happiness and welfare depends upon our mortifying the deeds of the body, since God hath so ordained, that if we do mortify them, we shall live, and that if we do not, we shall be for ever excommunicated from the regions of life and immortality.

II. This is also apparent from the nature of the thing. For if God had not excluded those that live in their sins from eternal life, by his own free ordination, yet they must have been excluded, the future happiness being so inconsistent with a vicious state, that it is impossible ever to reconcile them. For the thing itself implies a contradiction, and is not an object of any power, no not of omnipotence itself; and God may as well make white to be black, while it is white, as a vicious soul to be happy, while

it is vicious. For happiness is a relative thing, and doth in its own nature imply a correspondence and agreement between the faculty and the object; and be the object never so good in itself, yet if it doth not agree with the faculty whereunto it is objected, it is misery and affliction to it. Though a man should be entertained with all the delicate relishes of music, yet if he hath not a musical ear, it will be but a tedious ungrateful din to him; and though his appetite should be courted with all the rich varieties in nature, yet if they do not agree with his coarse and homely palate, he will distaste and nauseate them. And so if a man should be placed in heaven among all the joys with which that blessed state abounds, yet unless his mind and temper did suit and agree with them, they would all be so many miseries and torments to him; he would be afflicted even in Abraham's bosom, and grope for heaven in the midst of paradise; and it would be impossible for him to be pleased with his condition, till the genius and temper of his mind were altered, and the dispositions of his soul were reconciled to that heavenly state. So that if we can demonstrate that there is and must be antipathy and disagreement in wicked souls to the future happiness, it will then be apparent, from the nature and reason of the thing, that our enjoyment of the future happiness depends upon our ceasing to be wicked, or, which is all one, upon our mortifying the deeds of the flesh. Now to evidence this disagreement between wicked souls and the heavenly state, I shall do these three things:

First, Shew wherein the felicities of the future state do consist.

Secondly, What the temper and disposition of wicked souls will be in the future state.

Thirdly, How contrary such a temper and disposition must be unto such felicities.

1. I am to shew wherein the felicities of the future state do consist. And here I shall not presume to give you a particular description of heaven, the felicities whereof the apostle tells us are ineffable; but shall content myself to give you the general account of it, which I find in the revelation of the gospel. In general therefore we may be secure of this, that heaven is such an happiness as is most suitable to a rational nature; it being designed and prepared for reasonable beings, to whom (as I have shewed) it would not be a heaven, if it were not agreeable to their natures. For should God have provided for us a heaven of sensual felicities, to gratify the unbounded lickerishness of our carnal appetites, it would have been a happiness fitter for beasts than men: and whilst our sensual and brutish part had been feasted with everlasting varieties of carnal pleasures, our intellectual powers, which are the noblest ingredients of our natures, must have pined away a long eternity, for want of those joys and delights which alone are proper and agreeable to their natures. Now our proper happiness, as we are reasonable beings, consists in being perfectly rational, and in the union of our understandings, wills, and affections with such objects as are most agreeable to our rational natures. And what is it to be perfectly rational, but to reason truly according to the nature of things; and to choose and refuse, and love and hate, according to the dictates of true reason? And what is it to have our understandings, wills, and af-

fections united to such objects as are most agreeable to our reasonable natures, but only to know that which is most worthy to be known, and to choose and love that which is most worthy to be chosen and loved? When therefore our understanding is become so clear and vigorous as to reason aright, and penetrate into the natures of things, and our wills and affections are perfectly compliant and harmonious with it, and all these are in conjunction with God, the fountain of all truth and goodness, we are then arrived to the heavenly state of reasonable natures. And therefore all that is positively affirmed of the heavenly happiness in the gospel is only this; that it consists in our seeing God, and loving and resembling him, and being for ever associated with those blessed spirits that see and love and resemble him as well as we. And this doubtless is such a felicity as no mortal language can express: for how will my understanding triumph, when it is once emerged out of all the mists and clouds, with which it is here surrounded, into the clear heaven of vision, where it shall have a free and uninterrupted prospect throughout the whole horizon of truth; when God and heaven, and all the mysteries of the other world, shall be always present to my ravished thoughts! How hale and sound, how light and expedite will my soul be, when it is disentangled from all those unreasonable passions which here do clog and disease her! When all her jarring faculties shall be reduced into a perfect harmony, what a heaven of content and peace will there spring up within her own bosom! And when she is thus contempered to the divine perfection, and inspired throughout with a godlike nature, in what raptures of love and

ecstasies of joy will she converse with God and blessed spirits! This doubtless, if there were no more, is enough to make the heavenly state unspeakably happy and blessed: and this, together with perfect freedom from pains and misery and death, is all of heaven that God hath made known to us in his gospel. Here we are told that we shall be made *perfect;* that we shall *see* as we are *seen,* and *know* as we are *known,* and *behold* him that is invisible face to face: for *yet it doth not appear what we shall be,* says St. John; *but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is,* 1 Epist. iii. 2. There may be, and doubtless are, sundry additional felicities to these; but in these it is apparent the main of heaven doth consist, because these are all that God hath plainly revealed and made known to us.

2. The next thing proposed was to shew what the temper and disposition of wicked souls will be in the future state. And this may be easily gathered by considering wherein a wicked temper consists: for doubtless with the same temper of mind that we are of in this world, we shall go into the other: for merely by going into the other world men cannot be altered as to their main state, though they may be perfected as to those good dispositions that were here begun: so that he that is wicked here will be wicked there too, and that same disposition of mind that we carry with us to our graves we shall retain with us in eternity. If therefore we would know what the temper of a wicked soul will be in the future state, our best way will be to inquire what it is that we call a wicked temper here, because it will be the same here and hereafter. Now a wicked temper

consists of two things; first, of sensuality, and secondly, of devilishness. By sensuality, I mean an immoderate propension of the soul to the pleasures of the body; such an headstrong propension as wholly diverts the soul from all her nobler delights to the brutish pleasures of intemperance, and wantonness, and gluttony; together with those other lusts that are subservient to them, such as fraud, and covetousness, and ambition, and the like. By devilishness, I mean those spiritual wickednesses which do not so much depend upon the body as the former, but are more immediately centred in the soul; such as pride and malice, and wrath and envy, and hatred and revenge, &c. which are the sins of the devil, by which those once glorious and blessed spirits were transformed into fiends and furies. These are the venomous ingredients of which a wicked temper is composed. If you inquire therefore what the temper of a wicked soul will be in the future state, I answer, it will be the same there that it is here; that is, it will be sensual and devilish. As for the latter, there can be no doubt of it; for devilishness being immediately subjected in the soul, cannot be supposed to be separated from her by her separation from the body, and may as well abide in naked and separated spirits, as it doth in the apostate angels. And as for sensuality, though it cannot be supposed that a soul should retain the appetites of the body after it is separated from it, yet having wholly abandoned itself to corporeal pleasures while it was in the body, it may, and doubtless will, retain a vehement hankering after a reunion with it, which is the only sensuality that a separated soul is capable of. For when she comes into the world of spirits, her former accustom-

ing herself unto the pleasures of the body will have so debauched and vitiated her appetite, that she will be incapable of relishing any other pleasures but what are carnal and sensual, which because she cannot enjoy but in the body, she must needs retain an earnest and vehement longing to be reunited to it. For having never had any former experience of the pleasures of spirits, when she comes into the other world she will find herself miserably destitute of all that can be pleasant and delightful to her; and because she knows that the only pleasures she can relish are such as are not to be enjoyed but in conjunction with the body, therefore all her appetites and longings must needs unite into one outrageous desire of being embodied again, that so she may repeat these sensual pleasures, and act over the brutish scene anew. Which possibly may be the reason why such sensual souls have appeared so often in churchyards and charnel-houses, union with the body being that which these wandering ghosts have the most eager affections to, and that they are most loath to be separated from; which makes them perpetually hover about, and linger after their dear consort the body; the impossibility of their reunion with it not being able to cure them of their impotent desires, but still they would fain be alive again. Virgil:

——iterumque ad tarda reverti
Corpora: quæ lucis miseris tam dira cupido?

And this, I doubt not, was one great reason of those extraordinary abstinencies and bodily severities that were imposed by the primitive church; that by this means they might gently wean the soul from the pleasures of the body, and teach it beforehand to live upon the delights of separated spirits; that so it

might drop into eternity with ease and willingness, like ripe fruit from the tree; and that when it was arrived into the other world, it might not have its appetite so vitiated with these sensual delights, as to be incapable of relishing those spiritual ones, and so be endlessly tormented with a fruitless desire of returning to the body again. This therefore from the whole is plain and apparent, that the temper of wicked souls in the other world will be much the same as it is in this; that is, sensual and devilish, made up of rage and spite and malice, together with a vehement longing after the deserted body, in which they enjoyed the only pleasures they were capable of.

And having thus shewed you what are the felicities of the future state, and what the temper of wicked souls will be in the future state, I now proceed,

III. To shew you how contrary such a temper and disposition must be unto such felicities. And indeed sensuality and devilishness are the only indispositions for heaven; but such indispositions they are, that if upon an impossible supposition a soul could be admitted with them into the habitations of the blessed, she would not be able to relish one pleasure there: among all the delights with which the beatific state abounds, there would none be found that would please her distempered palate, which, like a feverish tongue, must disrelish and nauseate the sweetest liquor, by reason of its overflowing gall. And hence the apostle, exhorting his Christian Colossians to be thankful unto God for making them *meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light*, tells them, that this was effected by God's translating them out of the kingdom of *darkness into the kingdom of his*

own dear Son; that is, by enabling them to mortify their lusts, and inspiring them with the graces of the gospel: Coloss. i. 12, 13. And this will evidently appear, if we consider the particular felicities of which the heavenly state consists; which (as I have shewed above) consists, first, in the vision of God; secondly, in our likeness or resemblance to him; thirdly, in the love of him; and, fourthly, in the society of pure and blessed spirits: to all which there is an utter antipathy and disagreement in every sensual and devilish temper and disposition.

1. In every sensual and devilish mind there is an antipathy and contrariety to the vision of God; for the sight of God can be pleasant unto none but those who are in some measure contempered to his perfections, and transformed into his likeness. While we are unlike him, and contrary to him, as we must needs be while we are sensual and devilish, the sight of him would be more apt to amaze and terrify, than to please and delight us: for what pleasure could a soul take in the vision of that God whom she always hated, and could never endure to think of? doubtless she would be so far from being pleased with the sight of him, that it would be her grief and torment to behold him. The sight of his purity and holiness would be so far from delighting her, that it would but reproach her lewd and sordid degeneracy from the temper of a pure and immortal spirit: the vision of his mercy and goodness would be so far from pleasing her, that it would but upbraid the horrid devilishness of her own disposition: and which way soever she turned her eyes, she would see nothing in God but what did libel and condemn her own impurity and wickedness. And how is it pos-

sible that such a sight should ever be pleasing unto such a spectator? Doubtless the vision of God, which is the heaven of godlike souls, would be a hell to wicked ones; it would chase them out of heaven, if they were in it, and cause them to fly away from before the glory of it, as bats and owls do from the light of the sun, and of their own accords to wrap their guilty heads in the shades of eternal darkness and despair. For how could they endure the sight of that God in whom, while they continue so infinitely unlike him, it is impossible they should see any thing but causes of horror and confusion? For there must be in us some likeness and resemblance of God, to dispose us to behold him with pleasure and delight. For, as Maximus Tyrius hath well observed, the τὸ θεῖον, "the divine nature, which is not "visible to the eye of sense," Τὸ δὲ θεῖον ἀόρατον ὀφθαλμοῖς, μόνῳ δὲ τῷ τῆς ψυχῆς καλλίστῳ, καὶ καθαρωτάτῳ καὶ περωτάτῳ, καὶ κουφοτάτῳ, καὶ πρεσβυτάτῳ ὁρατὸν δι' ὁμοιότητα, Diss. 1. "is yet visible to that in the soul; "which is most pure and beautiful, and sublime "and noble, in respect of a certain similitude and "cognation that is between them." But where this similitude is wanting, the vision of God will be rather a hell than a heaven: if there be no correspondence between what we see in God, and what we are in ourselves, his glory may confound and dazzle us, but it is impossible it should please us: for what pleasure can we take in seeing that which is so infinitely disagreeable to our natures?

2. In every sensual and devilish mind there is an utter indisposition and contrariety to the love of God; for all love is founded in likeness, and doth result out of some harmony and resemblance that

there is between the lover and the beloved. But what resemblance can there be between a devilish and carnalized soul, and a good and holy God? And if there be none, light and darkness, or heaven and hell, may as soon agree as they. For how can a soul whose affections are drenched in matter, and wedded to the flesh, love the holy God, who is a pure and spotless spirit? What amity can there be in a black and devilish nature towards the most kind and benign Being in the world? Doubtless from such a contrariety of natures there must necessarily spring mutual antipathies and aversations. So that could such a soul be admitted to the vision of God, she would see nothing in him but what would enrage and canker her with malice against him: the sight of those glorious perfections in him, which are so repugnant to her own nature, instead of enamouring her, would but boil up her hatred into an higher degree of aversation to him. For even here we see, it is natural to lewd and wicked men, to picture God by the foul and monstrous original of their own tempers; and generally the notion which they have of him is nothing but the image of themselves, which, Narcissus-like, they fall in love with because it represents what they most delight in, even their own darling and beloved lusts. Which is a plain argument that they cannot love God, till they have deformed him into their own likeness, and with the Ethiopians copied him out in the resemblance of their own black and devilish tempers. When therefore they shall see him as he is, encircled about with his own rays of unstained and immaculate glory, the vast unlikeness they will then discern between him and themselves will doubtless enrage and sour

their spirits against him, and convert all their fondness towards him into an utter antipathy and aversation: for so long as he continues what he is, and they what they are, there will be such an irreconcileable contrariety between them, that they must hate either God or themselves, or else love contraries at the same time, which is impossible.

3. In every sensual and devilish mind there is a strong indisposition to their being made like unto God; i. e. there is the same indisposition in them to their receiving the likeness and image of God, as there is in one contrary to admit of another. Their sensual and devilish dispositions will as naturally resist the transforming impressions of the divine purity and goodness, as fire doth water, or moisture drought: for the image of God being a moral perfection, must be impressed on us by the intervening ministry of our understandings, that is, by our sight and vision of him; and hence this apostle gives the reason why *we shall be like unto him* when he doth appear, because *we shall see him as he is*, 1 John iii. 2. But the sight of God, which assimilates us to him, must be accompanied with the love of him; for it is love that provokes to imitation, and imitation that transforms the lover into the image of the beloved. For though doubtless the beatific vision doth work far more effectually upon prepared souls in the other life, than the knowledge of God doth in this, because here we see but in a glass darkly, whereas there our vision will be unspeakably more clear, intense, and vigorous; yet I doubt not but in assimilating us to God it works in a moral and rational way; that is, by vigorously affecting our wills with the perfections of God, so as to stir us up to an active imitation of

them, and efficaciously to excite us to transcribe them into our own natures; which it cannot be supposed to do, unless our souls be in some measure predisposed by holiness and purity to the love of God, and of those glorious perfections we shall then behold in him. For if we do not love God, the sight of him will be so far from provoking us to imitate him, that it will avert us from him, and render us more unimpressive to the transforming power of his glory. It is true, this vision of God will perfect our likeness to him, if it be begun; because then it will have a prepared subject to act upon, a soul that is tempered and disposed to the power of it, and to take impression from it: but yet it will not create a likeness where it never was, but will leave him that is wicked to be wicked still; he being an incapable subject of its benign influences, and altogether indisposed to be wrought upon by it. For as the sun enlightens not the inward parts of an impervious dunghill, and hath no other effect upon it, but only to draw out its filthy reeks and streams; though as soon as he lifts his head above the hemisphere, he immediately transforms into his own likeness all that vast space whither he can diffuse his beams, and turns it into a region of light: even so the divine glory and beauty, which is the object of the beatifical vision, will never illustrate lewd and filthy souls; their temper being impervious unto his heavenly irradiations, and wholly indisposed to be enlightened by it; but instead of that, it will irritate their devilish rage against it, and provoke them to bark at that light which they cannot endure: whereas it no sooner arises upon well-disposed minds, but it will immediately chase away all those relics of darkness remaining in them, and

transform them into its own likeness. But doubtless the sight of the divine purity and goodness will be so far from exciting sensual and devilish spirits to transcribe and imitate it, that it will rather inspire them with indignation against it, and provoke them to curse and blaspheme the author of it.

Fourthly and lastly, In every sensual and devilish soul there is an utter incongruity and disagreement to the society of *the spirits of just men made perfect.* For even in this life we see how ungrateful the society of good men is unto those that are wicked: it spoils them of their fulsome mirth, and checks them in those riots and scurrilities which are the life and piquancy of their conversation. So that when the good man takes his leave, they reckon themselves delivered, his presence being a confinement to their folly and wickedness. And as it is in this, so doubtless it will be in the other world: for how is it possible there should be any agreement between such distant and contrary tempers, between such sensual and malicious, and such pure and benign spirits? What a torment would it be to a spiteful and devilish spirit to be confined to a society that is governed by the laws of love and friendship! What an infelicity to a carnalized soul, that nauseates all pleasures but what are fleshly and sensual, to be shut up among those pure and abstracted spirits, that live wholly upon the pleasures of wisdom, and holiness, and love! Doubtless it would be as agreeable to a wolf to be governed by the ten commandments, and fed with lectures of philosophy, as for such a soul to live under the laws, and be entertained with the delights of the heavenly society. So that could these wicked spirits be admitted into the company

of the blessed, they would soon be weary of it; and perhaps it would be so tedious and irksome to them, that they would rather choose to associate themselves with devils and damned ghosts, than to undergo the torment of a conversation so infinitely repugnant to their natures; accounting it more eligible to live in the dismal clamour of hellish threnes and blasphemies, than to have a tedious din of heavenly praises and hallelujahs perpetually ringing in their ears. And indeed considering the hellish nature of a wicked soul, how contrary it is to the goodness and purity of heaven, I have sometimes been apt to think that it will be less miserable in those dismal shades, where the wretched furies, like so many snakes and adders, do nothing but hiss and sting one another for ever, than it would be, were it admitted into the glorious society of heavenly lovers, whose whole conversation consists in loving and re-loving, and is nothing else but a perpetual intercourse of mutual endearments. For this would be an employment so infinitely repugnant to its black and devilish disposition, that rather than endure so much outrage and violence, it would of its own accord forsake the blessed abodes, to flee to hell for sanctuary from the torment of being in heaven. But this however we may rationally conclude, that so long as the prevailing temper of our souls is sensual and devilish, we are incapable of the society of blessed spirits; and that, if it were possible for us to be admitted into it, our condition would be very unhappy, till our temper was changed: so that it is a plain case, both from God's ordination and from the nature of the thing, that our eternal happiness

and welfare depends upon our mortifying the deeds of the body.

To offer some practical inferences from hence:

1. We may perceive how unreasonable it is, for any man to presume upon going to heaven, upon any account whatsoever, without mortifying his lusts. For he that thinks to go to heaven without mortification and amendment, presumes both against the decrees of God and the nature of things; believes all the threatenings of the gospel to be nothing else but so many bugs and scarecrows; and though God hath told him again and again, that unless he forsake his sins he shall never enter into the kingdom of heaven, yet he fondly imagines, that when it comes to the trial, God will never be so severe as he pretends; but will rather revoke the decree that is gone out of his mouth, than exclude out of the paradise of endless delights a soul that is infinitely offensive to him. As if God were so invincibly fond and indulgent, as that rather than excommunicate an obstinate rebel from happiness, he would choose to prostitute the honour of his laws and government, and commit an outrage upon the rectitude and purity of his own nature. For so long as he is a pure God, he cannot but be displeased with impure souls; and so long as he is a wise governor, he cannot but be offended with those that trample upon his laws: so that before he can admit a wicked soul into heaven, he must have extinguished all his natural antipathy to sin, and stifled his just resentment of our wilful affronts to his authority. When therefore we can find any reason to imagine that God is no enemy to sin, and that he hath no regard of his own authority, then,

and not till then, we may have some pretence to presume upon going to heaven without mortification and amendment. But supposing this hinderance were removed, and that God were so easy as to be induced to prefer the happiness of a wicked soul before the honour of his government and the purity of his nature, yet still there is an invincible obstacle behind, that renders her future felicity impossible; and that is, that it cannot be without a plain contradiction to the nature of things. For, as I have shewed you already, the genius and temper of a wicked soul is wholly repugnant to all the felicities of the other world; so that if they were set before her, she would not be able to enjoy them, but must be forced to pine and famish amidst all that plenty of delights, there being not one viand in all the heavenly banquet that she could relish any sweetness in. Wherefore either her nature must be changed, or the nature of heaven; for while both continue what they are, they are irreconcileable: and if God himself were so easy and indulgent, as to pass by all the affronts in the other world which wicked souls have offered him in this, yet he could not make them happy there, without creating in them a new heart, or creating for them a new heaven. For it is altogether as possible for us to see without eyes, or hear without ears, as to enjoy heaven without a heavenly disposition. How causelessly therefore dost thou presume, thou that talkest of going to heaven, whilst thou continuest in thy sin! Alas! poor wretch, what wouldst thou do there, if upon an impossible supposition thou couldst be admitted into it? There are no wanton amours among those heavenly lovers, no rivers of wine among their rivers of pleasure, to

gratify thy unbounded sensuality; no parasite to flatter thy lofty pride, no miseries to feed thy meagre envy, no mischiefs to tickle thy devilish revenge; but all the felicities with which that heavenly state abounds are such as thou wouldst loathe and nauseate, as being too pure and refined for thy depraved appetite: so that if thou wert in heaven, it would be but a cooler damnation to thee; yea perhaps hell itself would be less intolerable, than a heaven so incongruous to thy nature. And yet how ordinary is it for lewd and dissolute persons to flatter themselves into confident hopes of heaven; for which, when they come to be examined, they can give no other reason but this, that they firmly rely upon the merits of their Saviour, who died for them, and obeyed God's law in their stead; and therefore, though they have no righteousness of their own, yet they doubt not, being clothed in the white garment of Christ, they shall be pardoned and accepted of God! Which is a pretence so very absurd and unreasonable, that one would think it were impossible for any man to be imposed upon by it, that had not a mind to deceive himself: for supposing what is false, that Christ did obey the law in our stead, and that God doth account us righteous because he was so; yet what would this signify to our pardon and future happiness, without an inherent righteousness of our own; which is so necessary to our future happiness, that heaven itself cannot make us happy without it? For if by being clothed in the robe of Christ's righteousness we could be admitted into heaven, yet, unless we left behind us our hellish disposition, we should be miserable wretches under that glorious garment; in which we would be only crucified, like Jesus in

his purple robe, with greater scorn and solemnity. For since the main of heaven consists in the perfection of inherent holiness, it necessarily follows that a mere imputable holiness will only entitle us to an imputable happiness, that is, to a mere imaginary heaven; which how glorious soever it may look at a distance, will, when we come to embrace it, glide from between our arms, and leave us desperate and miserable. And though it is true, that Christ by his death and passion hath purchased for us pardon and eternal life, yet it is upon this condition, that we mortify our lust, and conform to the rule of the gospel: and indeed without this, *pardon* and *eternal life* are words that signify nothing; for what doth a pardon signify to one that is dying of the stone or strangury? He can but die, if he be not pardoned, and die he must, though he be. And as little advantage it would be to a depraved soul, to be pardoned and absolved by God, while she hath a disease within her that preys upon her vitals, and hastens her to a certain ruin: she could have been but miserable in the future life, if she had not been pardoned; and miserable she must be, if she continue wicked, whether she be pardoned, or no. All the advantage that such a soul could reap from God's pardoning her, would be only to be released from those arbitrary punishments which God may inflict on her in the world to come; but if she were freed from these, yet by a necessity of nature she must still be extremely miserable; for her own wickedness would incapacitate her for heaven, and kindle a perpetual hell within her. So that should Christ have died to obtain a pardon for those that continue in their sin, he would have died to no purpose: for a wicked soul

cannot be pardoned, because there is such an inseparable relation between sin and punishment, that it is as great a contradiction for the one to be without the other, as for a son to be without a father. And then, though Christ by his death hath procured eternal life, yet he cannot have procured it for those that are unreformed; because they, if they might, yet cannot enjoy it, their inward temper and disposition being contrary to it: so that unless Christ by his death had altered the nature of heaven, and converted that paradise of pure and holy pleasures into a seraglio of brutish and carnal enjoyments, he cannot have procured it for lewd and depraved souls. So that for any man to presume upon heaven upon any account without holiness and amendment, is the most egregious nonsense in the world. For heaven is nothing else but holiness in its perfection, freed from all those incumbrances that here do perpetually clog and annoy it; so that a heaven without holiness is a heaven without a heaven, that is, a word that signifies nothing, a happiness wholly abstracted from itself. While therefore we flatter ourselves with the hopes of a future bliss, continuing in our sins, we do but court a painted heaven, and woo happiness in a picture; but in the mean-time are sinking into a true and real hell, where all our foolish hopes will be swallowed up for ever in our woful experience of its substantial miseries.

2. We may discern from hence the indispensable necessity of mortification, since it is plain we cannot be happy without it: so that to mortify our lusts is just as necessary for us, as it is to obtain heaven and avoid hell. For virtue and vice are the foundations of heaven and hell; hell is nothing but that hemi-

sphere of darkness in which all sin and wickedness move; and heaven is the opposite hemisphere of light, the glorious orb of holiness, truth, and goodness; and in the possession of the one or the other we do all of us actually instate ourselves in this life. For take holiness and virtue out of heaven, and all its glories will immediately be clouded in horrid darkness, and overcast with the dismal shades of hell: take sin and wickedness out of hell, and all its blackness of darkness will vanish, and it will presently clear up into light and serenity, and shine out into a glorious heaven. For it is not so much the place, as the state, that makes either the one or the other; and the state of heaven and hell consists in a perfect holiness and wickedness: and proportionably as we do improve in either of these, so we do approach towards heaven or hell. For as heaven is the centre of all that is virtuous, pure, and holy; and every thing that is good tends thither by a natural sympathy: so hell is the centre of all impiety and wickedness; and whatsoever is bad doth naturally press and sink down thither, as towards its proper place and element. And should not the divine vengeance concern itself in excluding wicked souls out of heaven, yet their own wickedness would do it; for that is a place of such inaccessible light and purity, that nothing that is impure can approach it; but must of necessity be beaten off by the perpetual lightnings of its glory, and tumbled headlong down as oft as ever it essays to climb up into it. As on the other hand, should not God by an immediate vengeance precipitate wicked souls into hell, yet their own sin and wickedness, hastened by the mighty weight of its own nature, would necessarily

hurry them down thither with a most swift and headlong motion. And if this be so, then questionless it is as necessary for us not to continue in our sin, as it is not to be excluded out of heaven, nay thrust down into the flames of hell: and did we but know what is meant, doubtless we should run away from our sins in a greater fright and maze than ever we did from the most astonishing danger. For consider, O man, by those short pleasures with which thou treatest thy lusts, thou excommunicatest thyself from eternal joys; and wouldst thou be but so wise as to deny thyself the pleasure of a moment, thou mightest be pleased for ever, and millions of ages hence be rejoicing among angels and blessed spirits, because thou wouldst not gratify thyself with those fulsome delights which would have died away in the enjoyment. And is it possible that thou shouldst be so besotted, as to exchange the pleasures of an immortal heaven for those of an intemperate draught, to sell the joy of angels for the embraces of an harlot, and pawn thy part in paradise for a little money, of which ere long thou wilt have no other use, but only to purchase six foot of earth and a winding-sheet? O most prodigious folly! what account canst thou give for such an extravagant bargain at the tribunal of thy own reason? But it may be you will say, What doth the loss of heaven signify, since (as you have told us already) if we could be admitted to it, it could be no heaven to us? And why should we think much of losing that which we cannot enjoy? To which I answer; It is true you cannot enjoy it, unless you part with your lusts, because heaven and they are inconsistent: but you may part with your lusts if you will, and being quit of these, you may

and shall enjoy it for ever. Your sin is the only wall of separation between you and heaven; which being once demolished, you may enter into it without any interruption, and take possession of all its glories. So that if you think the loss of heaven will be no trouble to you in the other world, because it is such a heaven as your depraved souls will be averse to, you are infinitely mistaken; for though you will be averse to it, yet your own consciences will tell you, that if you would, you might have conquered that aversation, as well as those blessed spirits that do enjoy it; and that if you had done so, you might have been infinitely happy as well as they. Whereas now you are condemned to wander for ever in a woful eternity, tormented with a restless rage and hungry unsatisfied desire after these sensual goods you have left behind you, and to which you shall never return more; the consideration of which will render the loss of heaven as grievous to you, as if it were a heaven overflowing with sensual delights, and abounding with such joys as you will then hunger after, but can never enjoy. For how will it sting you to the heart, when you shall thus ruminate with yourselves, as you are wandering through the infernal shades; "Ah, besotted fool that I am! now I see too late "that heaven is a state wherein a soul may be infi-"nitely happy. Look how yonder blessed spirits are "imparadised! how they exult and triumph! how "they sing and give praise, and are rapt into ecstasies "of love and joy! whilst I, through my own sensu-"ality and devilishness, am utterly incapable of those "sublime delights whereof their heaven is composed; "and, like a forlorn wretch, am left for ever desti-"tute of those sensual pleasures, which are the only

"heaven I can now enjoy." And therefore, as you would not spend an eternity in such direful reflections, and have those dismal thoughts, like so many vultures, preying upon you for ever, be persuaded to set presently upon this great and necessary work of mortification. For assure yourselves, God will as soon let hell loose into heaven, and people the regions of immortal bliss with the inhabitants of the land of darkness, as crown a wicked soul with the glorious reward of eternal life. For God hath reduced us to this issue; either our sins or our souls must die; and we must shake hands with heaven or our lusts: so that unless we value eternal happiness so little, as to exchange it for the sordid and trifling pleasures of sin; and unless we love our sins so well, as to ransom them with the blood of our immortal souls; it concerns us speedily to shake off our sins by repentance: for this is an eternal and immutable law, that if we will be wicked, we must be miserable.

3. From hence we may perceive what is the only true and solid foundation of our assurance of heaven, namely, our mortifying the deeds of the body; for if they that *mortify the deeds of the body shall live*, then if we do, or have mortified them, we are sure that we are entitled to eternal life. So that to be assured of heaven, we need not go about to spell out our names in the stars, or to read them in the secret volumes of eternal predestination: for if our wills be but so subdued to the will of God, that we do not live in any wilful violation of his laws, we may be as certainly persuaded of our interest in eternal life, as if one of the winged messengers from above should come down and tell us, that he saw our

names enrolled in the volumes of eternity. For besides that God hath promised heaven to us upon condition of our mortification, we shall, when our lusts are throughly subdued, feel heaven opening itself within us, and rising up from the centre of our souls in a divine life and godlike nature: so that we shall not need to seek for heaven without us, because we shall find it already come down into us, and transcribed into our own natures. And as we grow in grace from one degree to another, so heaven will break forth clearer and clearer upon us; and the nearer we approach to the top of the hill, the fuller view we shall have of the horizon and extended sky; till at last we come to walk all along in sight of heaven, and to travel towards it in a full view and assurance of it. But if we secure ourselves of heaven before we have mortified our lusts, we do but entertain our fancies with a golden dream; which when we awake will vanish away, and leave us desperate and miserable. If therefore we would be assured of our future happiness, let us not trouble ourselves with numerous signs of grace, nor go about to erect schemes of our spiritual nativity, to cast a figure to know whether we have grace or were converted *secundum artem;* but let us impartially examine whether our wills are so subdued to the will of God, as universally to choose what he enjoins, and refuse what he forbids. For if they are, our condition is good, and our hope secure, by what means or motives soever it was effected; and whether they are or no, we need no marks or signs to resolve us: for our thoughts and resolutions and intentions are signs enough to themselves, and we need no marks to know what it is that we choose

and refuse: this our soul can easily discern by that innate power she hath of reflecting upon our own motions, by which she doth as naturally feel her own deliberations and volitions, as the body doth its hunger and thirst. It is true, indeed, holy dispositions, like all other motions, the weaker they are, and the more they are interrupted by contrary motions and inclinations, the less they will be perceived; which is the reason why beginners in religion cannot be so sensible of the grace that is in them; because their good inclinations are checked and hindered by the strong and vehement counter-motions of their lusts: but the more their good inclinations prevail, and free themselves from these contrary inclinations which clog and incumber them, the more their souls will be sensible of them. For this we find by experience, that as we perceive our own motions, the more vigorous they are, the more we perceive them; especially when they are advised and deliberate, as all virtuous motions and inclinations are. For that a man should be insensible of a motion which he exerts advisedly, or not be able to know that he is so disposed when he is knowingly so disposed, implies a contradiction: and indeed, if we are not able to know when we choose and refuse as we should, when we resolve well and intend aright, we cannot discern when we do right or wrong; but are left to a necessity of acting at random, like travellers in the dark, that go on at a venture without knowing whether they go backward or forward. If we cannot know when we do well, it is impossible we should know how to do well; but must necessarily leave the conduct of our actions to chance, and fortune must determine us unto right or wrong.

Since therefore our soul is not a senseless machine, that hath no perception of her own motions, but is naturally sensible of whatsoever is transacted within her, let us no longer excuse our ignorance of our own condition with that common pretence, that our hearts are deceitful and hypocritical; for our hearts are ourselves, and, if they are deceitful and hypocritical, we ourselves are so. And yet I know not how it comes to pass, it passes among some men for a great sign of grace and sincerity, to complain of the falseness and hypocrisy of their own hearts; not considering that men are as their hearts are, and that if these are hypocritical, they themselves are hypocrites. If therefore our complaint be true, the more shame for us: this is so far from being a sign that we have grace, that it is a plain confession that we are graceless dissemblers. If our complaint be false, we falsely accuse ourselves in it; which is also so far from being a sign of grace, that it is an argument only of our own extravagant folly. But if we mistake in our complaint, and think that to be hypocrisy which is not, we should seek to be better informed: and if when you are so, you still complain of your hypocrisy, I doubt you have too much reason for it; and if you fear that you are hypocrites, I fear you are so too. For why should one that knows what an hypocrite is, fear that he is an hypocrite, were he not conscious to himself that he doth dissemble with God, and under an open pretence of submitting to him, disgu se some secret purpose of rebelling against him? Let us therefore lay aside all our impertinent scrupulosity, and fairly examine our own souls, whether we do submit to God without any reserve, and are willing to lay down all our be-

loved lusts at his feet: for whether we are or no, we may easily discern if we will. If we are, then are the foundations of heaven already laid within our own bosoms; and if upon this principle we grow in grace, and add one degree of virtue to another, we may be sure the superstructure will go on, until the whole fabric of our happiness is completed. For as nature by its powerful magic is continually drawing every thing unto its proper place and centre, so heaven attracts to itself and freely imbosoms every thing that is heavenly; and thrusts off nothing but what is unfit for and heterogeneous to it. If therefore our souls be of a pure and heavenly temper, heaven is the centre of our motions, and the proper place whereunto we belong, and whither at last we shall safely arrive, in despite of all those dismal shades of darkness that would beat us back, and interrupt our progress towards it: but, on the contrary, if we secure ourselves of heaven while we are enslaved to any lusts, we presume unreasonably, and embark our hopes in a leaky bottom, which in stress of weather will certainly founder under us, and sink us into utter despair: for how can we hope to be admitted into heaven, whilst we retain that within our own bosoms which kindles hell, and is the spring of the lake of fire and brimstone? This would be a confounding of utter darkness with the regions of light, a blending of heaven and hell together.

Fourthly and lastly, From hence it appears what is the great design of the Christian religion. We may be sure, God would not have sent his Son into the world, had not the embassy upon which he was employed been of the highest moment and concernment to us. And what other end, besides doing the

greatest good, could a good God propose in so great a transaction? Surely had we been in heaven when the Holy One descended thence into the world, though we had not known the particulars of his errand, yet we should have concluded that doubtless he was employed upon some great design of love; to communicate from the Almighty Father some mighty blessing to the world: and accordingly we find, that though the holy angels did not comprehend the particular intention and mystery of Christ's incarnation; yet they concluded in the general, that it was intended for some great good to the world, as is apparent by the anthem they sang at his nativity, *Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good-will towards men.* Now the greatest expression of God's good-will towards men is to rescue them from all iniquity, and restore them to the purity and perfection of their natures: for without this, all the blessings of heaven and earth are not sufficient to make us happy. While our nature is debauched and overgrown with unreasonable lusts and passions, we must be miserable, notwithstanding all that an omnipotent goodness can do for us: for misery is so essential to sin, that we may as well be men without being reasonable, as sinful men without being miserable. Since therefore the end of Christ's coming into the world was to dispense God's greatest blessings to mankind; and since the greatest blessing that we can receive from God is to be redeemed by his grace from ou iniquities, and to be made partakers of the divine nature; we may reasonably conclude, that this was his main design in the world, and the great end of that everlasting gospel which he revealed to it. And hence the name *Jesus* was given him by the direc-

tion of an angel, because he should *save his people from their sins*, Matt. i. 21. And indeed I cannot imagine any design whatsoever, excepting this, that could be worthy the Son of God's coming down into the world, to live such a miserable life, and die such a shameful death. Had it been only to save us from a plague, or war, or famine, it had been an undertaking fit for the lowest angel in the heavenly hierarchy: but to save us from our sins was an enterprise so great and good, as none in heaven or earth, but the Son of God himself, was thought worthy to be employed in. This therefore was the mark of all his aims while he was upon earth, the centre in which all his actions and sufferings met, to save us from our sins, and to inspire us with a divine life and godlike nature; that thereby we might be disposed for the enjoyment of heaven, and made to be *meet partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.* It is true, he died to procure our pardon too; but it was with respect to a farther end; namely, that we might not grow desperate with the sense of our guilts; but that by the promise of pardon, which he hath purchased for us, we might be encouraged to repent and amend. But should he have procured a pardon for our sin, whether we had repented of it or no, he would have only skinned over a wound, which, if it be not perfectly cured, will rankle of its own accord into an incurable gangrene. Christ therefore by the offering of himself is said *to purge our consciences from dead works, that we might serve the living God*, Heb. ix. 14. And the great apostle makes the ultimate intention of his giving himself for us to be this, *that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar*

people zealous of good works, Titus ii. 14. And until his death hath had this effect upon us, it is not all the merit of his blood and virtue of his sacrifice that can release us from the direful punishments of the other life. For unless he by his death had so altered the nature of sin, as that it might be in us without being a plague to us, it must necessarily, if we carry it with us into the other world, prove a perpetual hell and torment to us. So that it is apparent, that the great and ultimate design of Christ was not to hide our filthy sores, but to heal and cure them: and for this end it was that he revealed to us the grace of God from heaven, *to teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world*, Titus ii. 12. Let us not therefore cheat our own souls, by thinking that the gospel requires nothing of us but only to be holy by proxy, or righteous by being clothed in the garments of another's righteousness; as if its design was not so much to cure, as cover our filthy sores, not to make us whole, but to make us accounted so. For can any man imagine, that Christ would ever have undertaken such a mighty design, and made so great a noise of doing something, which, when it is all summed up, is nothing but a notion, and doth not at last amount unto a reality! As if the great design of his coming down from heaven to live and die for us, was only to make a cloak for our sins, wherein we might appear righteous before God without being so. But do not deceive yourselves; it is not all the innocence and obedience of Christ's life, nor all the virtue and merit of his death, that can render you pure and holy in God's eyes, unless you really are so: and you may as well be well with

another's health, or wise with another's wisdom, as righteous before God with the righteousness of Christ, while you abide in your sins. For God sees you as you are; and the most glorious disguise you can appear in before him will never be able to delude his all-seeing eye, so as to make him account you righteous when you are not: and if it were possible for you to impose upon God, yet unless you could also impose upon the nature of things, and by fancying them to be otherwise than they are, make them to be what they are not, it will be to no purpose. For if you could be clothed in Christ's righteousness while you continue wicked, it would signify no more to your happiness, than it would to be clothed in a most splendid garment, while you were pining with famine, or tortured with the gout or strangury. Wherefore, as we love our own souls, and would not betray ourselves into an irrecoverable ruin, let us firmly conclude with ourselves, that the great design of our religion is internal holiness and righteousness: and that without this, all that Christ hath done and suffered for us will be so far from contributing to our happiness, that it will prove an eternal aggravation to our misery; and that all that precious blood, which he shed in our behalf, will be so far from obtaining pardon and eternal happiness for us, that it will arise in judgment against us; and like the innocent blood of Abel, instead of interceding for us, will cry down vengeance from heaven upon us. For how can we imagine that the pure and holy Jesus, who hated our sins more than all the pangs and horrors of a woful death, should all of a sudden be so kind to them, as to give them shelter and sanctuary within his own meritorious wounds; and to make his blood

the price of a general indulgence to all impiety and wickedness, that so we might sin securely, and enjoy a safe retreat from his authority under the covert of his sacrifice? But be not deceived; the holy Jesus will never make himself an unholy Saviour for your sake; and your being called by the name of Christ is so far from giving you a privilege to sin, that it lays you under a stricter restraint; and if you violate it, it will expose you to a severer punishment, than if you had been heathens and infidels. For this is the great proposal of our religion, that Jesus Christ died to purchase pardon and eternal life for all that do repent and amend; but if we will go on in our sin, we are at a greater distance from pardon and eternal life, than if we never had had a Savionr to undertake for us.

END OF VOL. III.

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